

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

PLAYING FOR MONEY; OR, THE BOY TRADER OF WALL STREET.

AND OTHER STORIES

By A SELF-MADE MAN



"What is the meaning of this racket?" demanded Mr. Parker, grabbing Al by the arm. "He slugged me in the eye," whined the sandy-haired messenger. "That boy is not to blame," interposed Bessie, coming forward. "Clarence Burns was the aggressor"

Issued weekly—Subscription price, \$4.00 per year! Canada, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, inc., 160 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 1068

NEW YORK, MARCH 19, 1926

Price 8 Cents.

By A SELF-MADE MAN

Introduces Al Britton and Burt Hale.

"How much money have you got, Burt?" asked Al Britton.

"Six dollars and thirteen cents. How much have you?" replied Burt Hale.

"Five dollars and eighty-four cents."

"The cheapest way to New York is two dollars apiece by boat."

"That's right," nodded Al.

"That's a small fortune to us at this stage of the game."

"It is, so we'll hang on to it."

"Then how will we get to the city? Tramp it and trust to our music to pay our expenses?"

"It might take us two weeks, and would cost us each the price of a new pair of shoes when we got there. I've a better plan."

"What is it?"

"We'll try to work our way down the river on the boat."

"Work our way? How? Do you mean by playing our instruments and taking up a collection from the passengers?"

"Nothing of the kind. We wouldn't be permitted to do that."

"Then how shall we work our way?"

"Apply for a job on the boat to assist in handling freight."

"Any chance of our getting such a job?"

"Maybe."

"I don't believe they want boys."

"No harm in going to the wharf and making an application. I noticed an advertisement in the paper for able-bodied deckhands for the day boats."

"Do you call you and me able-bodied?" grinned Burt.

"We're strong and healthy-looking, and not afraid of work."

"Can we hustle truck-loads of merchandise aboard the board if we're taken on?"

"We can make a good bluff at it."

"A bluff won't go, I'm afraid. We'll have to make good or get the G. B."

"Are you game to try the raffle?"

"I'm game to tackle anything that leads to New York."

"Then we'll turn in, for we've got to be at the dock at five o'clock."

Al Britton and Burt Hale were two bright, ambitious boys whom an unfortunate combination of circumstances had thrown on their own resources.

They had come together in a cheap Albany boarding-house a short time before the opening of this story, and had immediately struck up an acquaintance which rapidly developed into a warm friendship.

In a word, they became chums.

Their tastes and ambitions were somewhat similar and both happened to be accomplished young musicians—one being an expert on the violin, the other on the mandolin.

All their earthly possessions consisted of a gripsack each of wearing apparel and other odds and ends, and their two musical instruments.

They had been working at odd jobs around the capital for a month, but neither could get hold of steady employment.

Therefore, after talking their prospects over very seriously together they resolved to make their way to the metropolis, where they believed there was plenty of work for willing hands.

They had got acquainted with a young fellow who had been a messenger and junior clerk in a Wall Street broker's office, and the glowing pictures he drew of the opportunities to make money in the stock market quite captivated the two boys.

He told them about a little bank on Nassau Street that bought and sold for customers as low as five shares of any stock at a time.

"There are successful young brokers in Wall Street today," he said, "who made their start at that very bank on a \$50 bill when they were messengers. It is not an uncommon thing for a stock to rise fifteen or twenty points inside of a few days. If you are so fortunate as to get in on the ground floor you stand a fine chance of doubling your money twice over. I myself have cleared \$250 on a \$100 investment on margin."

He explained the whole principle of marginal transactions to the interested boys, and also enlightened them a great deal on the methods of the Stock Exchange; but he did not think it necessary to explain why he had abandoned such a money-making field as the financial district for a clerkship in an Albany insurance office.

Nor did it occur to the boys at the time to ask him why he had abandoned such excellent chances to make his fortune as he described.

They grew infatuated with the idea of making a start in Wall Street themselves, and they could talk of little else when they met each evening after a generally unsatisfactory day.

Having determined to go to New York, Al, who was the more energetic of the two, insisted that no time ought to be lost in putting their plan into execution.

The boys were up at four o'clock next morning, and after a light breakfast of coffee and rolls, with their grips in one hand and the cases containing their musical instruments in the other, they started for the wharf of the Day Boat line of steamers that plied between New York City and Albany on the Hudson River.

They reached the wharf at ten minutes after five.

Several policemen were on duty at the head of the dock, and small groups of sullen-looking men in blue shirts, with their jackets under their arms, were gathered near the wharf, talking and gesticulating.

Sometimes they tried to walk on to the dock, but were ordered away by the officers, who held their locust nightsticks in their hands.

Al and Burt stopped and looked on the scene before them in some wonder.

They were not aware that a strike of the deckhands of the Day Line was on for higher wages, and that the police were there to keep the malcontents from interfering with the new hands who had been employed in their places.

Al's first idea was that the men in the blue shirts were the overflow of the applicants who had answered the company's advertisement, and had been turned away after all the places had been filled.

The reflection was a disappointing one.

It looked as if there was small chance for them to work their way down the river on the Day Line at any rate.

"I'm afraid we're out of it," he said to his companion, after they had stood about five minutes on the opposite side of the way watching the scene.

"Nothing more than I expected," replied Burt in a resigned tone. "I suppose we might as well turn around and go back."

"No," answered Al, squaring his jaw in a resolute way, "not before I see the mate of the boat."

"What's the use if there are more men here than are wanted?"

"Maybe he could find some use to make of us on the trip down. We're not going to charge him any wages, which ought to be an inducement."

Al led the way across the street to the wharf.

A policeman blocked their progress.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Aboard the Albany to see the mate," replied Al.

The officer scrutinized them and finally permitted them to pass.

The end of the wharf was filled with cases, bags, and small freight of every description, which was being hustled over the gangway, disappearing in the uncertain light of the steamer Albany's freight deck.

The men who wheeled the trucks and handled the goods under the direction of a good-looking

young man, standing near a forward stanchion, were not at all like the fellows in the blue shirts on the street.

They were of all ages and conditions, most of them unshaven and rough, and even Al saw that a lot of unnecessary confusion prevailed in their work.

They did not move about like men who understood their business thoroughly, but rather like new hands being broken in.

Al and Burt followed behind two men wheeling truckloads, and were soon on the freight deck.

The young man aforesaid was first mate of the steamer.

Under his skilful direction the miscellaneous loads of the hand-trucks took the shape of compact walls in the middle of the deck.

The young man aforesaid was first mate of the steamer. Under his skilful direction the miscellaneous loads of the hand-trucks took the shape of compact walls in the middle of the deck. Some of these piles reached to the deck above. A span of horses was led aboard behind Al and Burt. They were taken to a certain part of the deck. As the mate followed them he came face to face with the boys.

"What do you want aboard here?" he demanded gruffly.

"We are looking for a chance to make ourselves useful in return for a passage down the river," replied Al, acting as spokesman.

The boat was very short-handed that morning and the mate, though at another time he would have turned down the young applicants in short order, looked at them critically.

"Are you strong and used to work?" he asked sharply.

"We are," answered Al.

"Well, I'll take you on at a chance. I'll give you fifty cents apiece and your grub for the day."

"We'll take it," cried Al, joyfully.

"Take your traps forward. You'll see an iron ladder leading down into the forward hold. Put your duds on the first vacant berth and help yourselves to a pair of overalls and a jumper you'll find there, and then come back here."

"Come on, Burt," said Al, "follow me."

"Gee! But we've struck luck after all," said Burt, as they hurried forward.

"It's the fellow that strikes out who always gets there," replied Al. "Here is the ladder into the hold."

"Kind of dark down there."

"Don't you worry about that. Wait till I get down and get rid of my grip and violin case, then you can hand me down your baggage and I'll put it with mine. No need of us both going into the hold. I'll toss you up a jumper and a pair of overalls."

In less than ten minutes the boys presented themselves before the mate ready for work.

He gave them an approving nod, for he saw that they looked like strong boys.

"Come here," he said. "I want you to make stalls for these two horses."

The mate showed them how to accomplish the job by setting movable stanchions up in openings cut in the beams, after which a strong rope was made fast behind the horses to prevent them from backing out of their narrow confines. The carriage to which the animals belonged was left in the freight house to be loaded last. When the

boys finished the job the mate pointed out a couple of hand-trucks and set them to wheeling the lighter class of freight aboard. The boys worked with a will, and, although they were both strangers to the employment, they did much better than the rest of the new hands, and the mate congratulated himself on having secured their services. The work went on steadily until half-past six o'clock, when all hands knocked off for breakfast, which was served at a table in the rear of the dining-room. Oatmeal, steak, rolls and coffee were served to the hands, and everybody was hungry enough to make a hearty meal off the plain but wholesome food. Twenty minutes was allowed for eating and then work was resumed again on the wharf and freight deck.

It was not long before the early passengers appeared, and from that on they boarded the boat in an increasing stream. The scene was a novel and somewhat exciting one to Al and Burt, but they had little time to take notice of what was going on around them. After all the freight was aboard a crowd of Italians, who had been doing contract work in the vicinity of Albany, came on the steamer with their bags and bundles. They gathered in a small space forward and kept up a constant jabber in their own lingo among themselves. The large gangway was hauled into the freight shed and a deckhand closed the port.

Al and Burt were then sent on to the dock to assist in carrying the trunks and other checked baggage aboard that had accumulated at the end of the wharf. The hour for the departure of the boat had now arrived, and a few belated passengers were to be seen rushing for the gang-plank, beside which stood a couple of dock-hands ready at the mate's signal to haul it back on the wharf. The last whistle blew, and then the captain, standing on the upper deck, ordered the lines to be cast off.

Then the bell in the engine-room sounded, the great paddle-wheels began to revolve slowly, and the handsome big steamer moved away from her wharf and headed down the river.

CHAPTER II.—The Theft.

"We're off at last," said Burt gleefully, as he and his companion, with nothing more to do, stood leaning over the bulwark forward watching the moving water and the receding shore.

"Yes, the trip has begun," nodded Al, in a tone of satisfaction. "Free passage, free meals, and fifty cents apiece for a few hours of hard work that is good for our health. We're in great luck."

"Bet your boots we are," agreed Burt.

"We're on the road to fortune, I hope."

"It's the finest road in the world if you can only hit it," said Burt. "Phil Joliby said it was as easy as rolling off a log to pick up money in Wall Street."

"We've got to have \$50 to spare before we can try our luck. That's the lowest sum the bank will accept on a margin deal. So the first thing we've got to do is to secure a job."

"You mean two jobs—one for each of us."

"Of course. The \$12 that forms our present capital won't go very far towards keeping us in food and lodging in the city."

"Not over a week."

"To-morrow morning we must get a hustle on."

"What time does the boat reach New York?"

"Don't know, but I'll soon find out. Wait here till I come back."

Al went to the engine-room and made inquiries of the engineer.

He learned that the boat was due at her first stopping place in Manhattan, foot of 129th Street, at five o'clock, and at Desbrosses Street, her third and last wharf, forty minutes later.

He carried this information to Burt.

"We'll have plenty of time to hunt up a room," said his friend.

"We'll stay aboard the steamer all night, I guess," said Al. "We've got to help put the freight on the dock, and that will take some time."

"I forgot about that," replied Burt ruefully.

"We'll start out first thing in the morning to look up a job somewhere around Wall Street. We can find a room any time."

"All right. Whatever you say goes. This is a fine sail down the river. I'm feeling like a bird."

Some hours passed, during which the boys discussed their prospects and the money they expected to make in Wall Street, then the long whistle of the steamboat announced its approach to Kingston Landing. When the lines were made fast Al and Burt were called on to lend a hand with freight and trunks bound for New York. There was little of anything to go ashore at this place. Between that stopping place and Poughkeepsie, on the opposite side of the river, which was reached at half-past one, the boys had their dinner with the rest of the deck-hands. Close to Poughkeepsie they passed the day boat bound up to Albany, and then they went on down to Newburgh, their next stopping place. A crowd of passengers were taken on here, and a pile of baggage. The next landing the boat made at West Point, and the steamer didn't stop again till she reached her wharf at Yonkers.

After leaving Yonkers the boys were tired of the long trip and they lounged off on a couple of sacks not far from the bunch of Italians. The foreigners were also wearied by the trip and were mostly asleep. Those who were not were lying on their stomachs across some merchandise with their backs to the boys. The boys were dozing, with their hats tilted over their eyes, when two well-dressed men approached that part of the boat. The newcomers paused and surveyed the sleepers.

"Which is the chap who has the money?" Al heard one of them say. He glanced covertly at the speaker, wondering what he meant by the words.

"The fellow with the fancy straw. He's asleep, and so are the others around him. Now is our chance," was the reply of the other man.

Al saw the two men softly approach the Italian in question. One was tall and thin, the other husky and short. The tall man deftly reached down toward the sleeping foreigner, inserted his hand inside his jacket and pulled out a fat black pocketbook, which he dropped into his own pocket, after which action the two men started to walk away.

"Well, if that isn't the nerviest thing I ever saw," muttered Al, too astonished to move for a moment.

Then he nudged Burt and sprang to his feet.

"Here, Mister Man," he cried to the thief.

"Come, now, fetch back that pocketbook! Do you hear?"

"What's the matter, Al?" asked Burt, rubbing his eyes.

"Robbery is the matter. Wake up that Italian in the fancy straw hat and tell him he's been cleaned out of a wallet."

"What do you mean?" demanded the tall man quickly passing the pocketbook to his companion, unseen by Al. "Who are you calling a thief?"

"I'm calling you one. I saw you pinch that Italian's pocketbook."

"You must be crazy!"

As Bob reached over to awaken the Italian, two of the foreigners lying on their stomachs looked around, their attention attracted by the disturbance. The Italian who had been robbed awoke suddenly of his own accord, and the first thing he did was to put his hand in his inside pocket where he carried his wallet. Then he jumped up wild-eyed, uttering a loud exciting cry.

"Somebody steal my mon'. I havea his life!"

In a moment an ugly-looking stiletto flashed in his fist, and there was blood in his eye as he gazed around. His countrymen were aroused by the intensity of his speech, and they were at no loss to understand its meaning at once.

"There is the man who took your pocketbook," said Al, pointing at the tall thief.

The fellow laughed sneeringly and made no effort to get away, but his companion, the short, stout chap, slipped behind a pile of freight and then made off.

"Ha!" cried the Italian. "You gotta my mon', eh? You givea to me or I sticka you with dis," and he flourished the stiletto.

"I haven't got your money," replied the rascal, coolly. "That boy who was standin' over you just now," pointing at Burt, "took it if anybody did."

The other foreigners who had seen Burt in the act of awaking their countrymen, began to jabber in an excited way in their native tongue.

Whatever it was they said caused the robbed Italian's suspicions to fix themselves on Burt as the thief, and he made a grab for him.

Burt hastily drew back and took his stand beside Al.

"You robba me!" cried the Italian, advancing on Burt. "You givea me my mon' or I fixa you."

"Hold on, there," ejaculated Al, stepping in front of his companion. "What's the matter with you, anyway? I told you that man there took your pocketbook."

"No believea dat. Disa boy, he takea my mon'. My friends dey seea him putta handa in my pock'. I believea dem. No believea you."

Matters looked pretty serious for Burt at that moment, and the boy showed in his face that he realized the fact. Al, however, knowing positively that the tall man was the real thief, stood pluckily by his friend.

"Your friends did not see him do anything of the kind. If you don't believe me search both—this man here and my friend."

"Alla right. I searcha him first," said the Italian.

Burt submitted to the ordeal, though it went against his grain to let a filthy fellow paw him over; but there was no help for it. He hadn't taken the man's money, and of course it couldn't be found on him.

While the Italian was feeling in Burt's pockets, Al kept his eye on the real thief, who, to his surprise made no attempt to escape. Then it was that he noticed that the short, chunky man had disappeared and he began to have his suspicions. The Italian concluded his useless search by looking into Burt's shoes.

"Now search that man," said Al, though he had begun to have his doubts that the money would be found on the rascal. The tall man, with a sarcastic smile on his lips permitted the foreigner to investigate his pockets, and the result was as unsatisfactory to Al as it was to the Italian.

"Well, you young monkey," said the thief, "you see you were off your trolley. If I had taken this chap's money it would have been found on me, wouldn't it?"

"I saw you take it, all right, for I was looking at you. There's no doubt in my mind now that passed it to your companion."

"I passed nothin' to him."

"Then why did he make himself scarce as soon as I suggested to the Italian to search you?"

"Oh, he just walked off, expectin' me to follow," replied the crook lightly.

"You tell it well. I feel sorry for this poor man that you robbed."

The Italian had been talking excitedly to his companions. He was about crazy over the loss of his money, which amounted to a considerable sum—all his savings for several months.

"You letta me searcha you, too," said the Italian at length, walking up to Al.

"All right. Go ahead if it will do you any good," replied the boy good-naturedly.

Of course there was no sign of the pocketbook or the money on him. The Italian then started off to hunt up the mate and tell him his misfortune.

CHAPTER III.—In New York.

As soon as the foreigner had gone aft, the tall, thin man turned on Al.

"I'll get square with you some day perhaps for the trouble you've given me," he said in a menacing tone and manner. "If I ever meet you again I sha'n't forget what I owe you, depend on it."

With those words, and flashing a sinister look on Al, he turned on his heel and walked away.

"What made you accuse him of taking the Italian's money?" asked Burt. "He didn't have it on him."

"Not when he was searched he didn't, that was plain enough. He passed it to his friend, who took advantage of the excitement to get away."

"How do you know he passed it to his companion?"

"Because he must have done so, or it would have been found on him."

"What makes you so certain that he had it?"

"Because I saw him take it."

"You did!" exclaimed Burt, in surprise.

"I did."

"Then why didn't you nab him at once before he could get rid of it?"

"Because I was taken by surprise, and secondly because he worked the game too quickly for me to act as I probably ought to have done."

"You ought to go and tell the captain about the matter."

"I will. I'll do it right away."

Al removed his overalls and started on his mission. He found a crowd near the baggage-room where the passengers had checked their grips and bundles after coming on board. The Italian and the first mate were in the center of it. The excited foreigner was telling his story and gesticulating like a crazy man. Al pushed his way into the mob of curious passengers.

"I can tell you something about this robbery," he said to the mate.

"Let me hear what you know about it," replied the mate.

Then Al told how he had seen the tall, thin man take a fat pocketbook, that looked as if it were full of money or something else, from the Italian.

"There was a short, thick-set man with him, dressed in a light checked suit. I am sure he must have passed the wallet to him, though I didn't see him do it, for he allowed himself to be searched when I accused him of the theft and the pocketbook was not found on him. The man in the checked suit sneaked off during the excitement."

"Will you be able to recognize that man again?" asked the mate.

"Easily."

"Then come with me and see if you can point him out."

The mate told the distressed Italian that he would see if he could get his money back, and the foreigner with that assurance returned to his companions.

Al and the mate made a tour of the boat, which was now passing Grant's Tomb in the distance; but though they made a careful survey of the crowded boat the two rascals could not be found. It was quite possible that the boy missed them in the crowd, though he told the mate that he believed the men were hiding somewhere below.

"Well," said the mate, "we must watch the gangway at 129th Street. If they make no attempt to go ashore there then we'll keep a lookout at the other landings. They'll have to leave the boat at one of them. As soon as we get them we'll have them both searched together. I'll take you up to the captain now, and you can tell him your story."

The captain was on the hurricane deck, as the boat was approaching the wharf at 129th Street. After the mate had acquainted the captain with what had happened on the forward freight deck, Al made the same statement as he had told the mate. The skipper was greatly surprised and annoyed about the robbery. He decided that the mate's plan of watching the gangway at the landings was the only feasible way of catching the two crooks. A great difficulty presented itself to the captain, however, which was that the men had probably divided their spoil by this time and got rid of the pocketbook. In that event it would be next to impossible to prove that any money found on their persons was not their own money. If the combined sum found upon them approximated the amount stolen from the Italian it would tend, in connection with Al's statement, to establish a strong enough suspicion of their guilt to warrant their arrest.

Whether they would be held by a magistrate afterward, as Al's story could not be corroborated, was another thing altogether. Al took his stand at the gangway at the 129th Street landing, and

watched the crowd closely as it filed ashore, but the tall, thin man and his companion were not among them. When the Forty-second Street landing was made Al watched again, without result. Finally at the last stop at Debrosses Street the boy renewed his surveillance of the balance of the passengers, but in vain. The rascals managed to get ashore under his eye, or had sneaked off from some other part of the steamer without attracting attention. When all the passengers were ashore and Al reported his non-success to the commander of the boat, a thorough search was ordered. Nothing came of it, so further action on the matter was given up.

Al and Burt sat down to supper with the deckhands, and then turned to and helped get out the freight on to the wharf. When the job was completed the mate came up to the boys and offered them a steady job for the season abroad the steamer. Al declined his offer with thanks, saying that New York City was the Mecca of their hopes, and now that they had arrived there they did not expect to leave it in a hurry. The mate then handed them half a dollar apiece and told them they could sleep on board the steamer that night if they wished. They gratefully accepted the favor, and half an hour later both were sound asleep in a couple of bunks below deck, for they were weary after the hard work and the excitement of the day. Next morning the mate awakened them early and offered them a quarter apiece if they would assist in loading the up-river freight aboard. They consented and pitched in, for it meant a free breakfast as well. The boat was advertised to leave at 8:20, and shortly after eight Al and Burt received their quarter each, and were presently on Canal Street walking toward Broadway. The mate had directed them to a house on one of the streets running north from Canal where they could get lodging by the day, week or month, and they decided to go there first and leave their personal property. The first floor of the house in question was occupied by a small cheap grocery. Al entered the store and asked for Mrs. Bragg. He was told that the woman lived upstairs, and that he must take the side door. The side door which communicated with a dirty hallway and a narrow flight of oil-cloth covered stairs, stood wide open.

Al and Burt marched up to the second floor and the former knocked on the first door they came to opening on to the dark and contracted hallway or landing.

A stout woman attired in a faded wrapper opened the door and asked them what they wanted.

"Mr. Jordan, mate of the Day Line steamer Albany, recommend us to come here for a furnished room," said Al.

"I can give you a small room for \$2 a week, or a better one for \$3.50," replied the landlady of the house.

"Is the \$2 a week one large enough for us both?" asked Al.

"It is small, but you might make it do if you wish to economize. The other room is very much more convenient if you can afford the additional price. Shall I show them to you?"

"Show us the small room, ma'am," replied Al. "We haven't much money, and we would like to get on as cheaply as possible until we can get a start in the city."

"You are strangers in New York, then?"

"Yes, ma'am."

Mrs. Bragg led the way up two flights and ushered Al and Burt into a small back room, furnished with a bed barely large enough to accommodate two, an iron washstand, a small looking-glass with plain frame, one common wooden chair, a shelf, and half a dozen hooks on the back of the door to hold clothes.

A well-worn carpet of cheap material covered the floor, and one window, not overclean, looked out on a series of back tenement yards, crossed at all angles by clotheslines.

"We'll take it for a week, ma'am," said Al, after a look around, "and then maybe we'll take a better room, if you have one left, or move somewhere else."

"Very well, young man. I shall want to know your names. It is my custom to get my room rent in advance," said Mrs. Bragg.

"Two dollars, you said, ma'am," and Al took out his limited capital.

"Yes."

He handed her two dollar bills, and gave her their names.

"Here is the key," she said. "If you or your friend will come downstairs, or you will stop on your way out, I will give you a receipt for a week's rent of the room."

"We'll stop on our way out, ma'am," said Al.

"Here's my share of the rent," said Burt, after Mrs. Bragg had withdrawn.

"All right, old man," replied Al, accepting the bill.

They washed up and then Al sat on the bed and Burt on the chair.

"Now," said Al, "I've been thinking matters over about the best way for us to get a start. I suggest that we try the musical dodge first down in Wall Street."

"You mean for us to take our instruments down there and play around the streets for what we can pick up?" asked Burt.

"That's my idea. Jolliby encouraged us to do that. He said the brokers are liberal chaps with their coin."

"It's a good scheme," replied Burt. "I'd rather try that for a while before taking up any kind of regular work. You and me play together in great shape. I'll bet we'll make a hit down there."

"I hope so. I'm anxious to get that spare \$50 together so that we can get in on the market."

"So am I."

"Well, it must be after nine o'clock. Let's get a move on. The sooner we make a start the better."

"I'm with you," said Burt. "We ought to have no trouble finding our way to Wall Street. All we've got to do is reach Broadway and then walk downtown."

Al nodded and the two boys, taking their instruments from their cases, tucked them under their arms and left the lodging-house, whose location they took not of.

CHAPTER IV.—Playing for Money.

Al and Burt reached Wall Street without any difficulty. It was simply a matter of walking straight down Broadway till they came to Trinity Church and the street was before them.

"So this is Wall Street," said Burt. "This is where all the millions are made that we read and hear about. This is the financiers' paradise and our stamping-grounds hereafter."

They stopped and looked in at a money broker's window.

"Gee! What a lot of money!" cried Burt, gazing openeyed at the trays of gold and silver coin struck in the mints of different nations, flanked around with paper notes from the same and other countries, together with small Japanese saucers filled with little wafer-like American gold dollars, and other freak currency. "How much do you suppose there is in this window?" he added.

"Ask me something easy, Burt, and maybe I'll be able to tell you," laughed Al.

"Do you think there is ten thousand dollars?" persisted Burt.

"Probably. What difference does it make to us if there is? It doesn't belong to us."

"Some day we may be worth as much as all this money in the window."

"I hope we'll be worth a great deal more."

A little further on they came to another window full of money and Burt insisted on stopping while he feasted his eyes on it. Then a third window attracted him. By that time they were close to Nassau Street, where it begins at the corner of Wall and faces Broad Street.

"This is Nassau Street," said Al.

"The street that Jolliby said the little bank was on," replied Burt, with great interest.

"That's right."

"Let's go up and see the little bank," said Burt. "What's the number?"

"Why, there it is yonder. You can see it from here. Twig the sign—The Nassau Street Banking & Brokerage Company."

"I see it. Is that the Sub-treasury across the street?"

"That's it."

"Where is the Stock Exchange?"

"Down Broad Street on this side of the way. That's Broad Street over there."

"It certainly is broader than either Wall or Nassau," said Burt. "One would think you'd been in New York before."

"Oh, I recollect all that Jolliby said about the lay of the streets hereabouts."

"You've got a better head than I have, Al. Where's New Street?"

"On the other side of the way up toward Broadway," replied Al, pointing.

"An Exchange Place?"

"I'll show you when we come to it."

"Let's go down to the Stock Exchange. Can we get in?"

"Not without a ticket, and then only to the gallery. Jolliby told us that, if you remember."

"I don't remember half he told us."

"I remember everything he told us, or most everything. Come along."

They walked down Broad Street to the Exchange, and paused in front of the building. Brokers, clerks and messengers were constantly going in and coming out at the main and side entrances. A continual throng of people was going up and down on the sidewalk.

"This is as good a place as any to start up our music," said Al, walking out to the edge of the curb.

As they started to tune up they attracted instant notice. A crowd began to gather around them. Al began to play an overture and Burt snipped in with the mandolin. It was high-class music, and the crowd grew larger. The boys played with the skill and expression of accomplished musicians, not at all like the average itinerant street players. Every note turned up in its proper place, although they had no music to go by. They were not ear players, but had learned to read music by sight, and they remembered everything about a piece after they had practiced it carefully a number of times, if it was not too difficult.

When they stopped they were enthusiastically applauded. They were neatly attired and had intelligent, good-looking and honest faces. Apparently they were not common boys by any means. Their music and manners alone endorsed that fact.

"Off with your hat, Burt, and pass it around," said Al, suiting the action to the word.

One broker was so pleased with the music that he tossed half a dollar into Al's hat, other brokers came up with a quarter each, and a part of the crowd contributed various small sums. In all, the boys gathered in nearly three dollars. As they started to give an encore a detective came up and ordered them on for obstructing traffic, and they had to make a change of base.

"Two dollars and seventy-eight cents isn't so bad," said Al, after counting the coin. "If we wasn't interfered with we could make a good thing with our music around here. Here is Exchange Place now."

"Gee! What a narrow street."

"New Street is just as bad. I noticed it while you were looking in at the money broker's window. We'll go up that way."

They stopped at the corner of Exchange Place and New Street and played some selections. They drew quite a crowd, and collected over a dollar. Then they went down New Street and played at the corner of Beaver Street, making a dollar and a half. They stopped at various places along Beaver, making small collections. Then they walked up Hanover Street and played twice along that street. They drew a crowd at the corner of Wall Street and made two dollars.

"How much have we got now, Al?" asked Burt, eagerly.

"You mean how much have we made since we started to play?"

"Yes."

Al counted the change and found that they had collected \$8.50. Then they took a rest until the clerks and messengers began going to lunch. They started up again in front of a quick-lunch house on Pine Street and made sixty cents. When they had made \$10 and something over they went into a lunch house and had something to eat. Then they went down where the Curb brokers were holding forth and sprang their music on them. A big crowd gathered around them in the street. They opened with selections from "Robin Hood," and collected over \$5 the first clip from the brokers. They followed that up with the "Carnival of Venice," Al furnishing variations on his instrument. The brokers kept them going for some time. They made no further effort to collect, thinking they had done very well, but as they

were walking away, nearly \$5 more was pressed on them.

"We'll have that \$50 pretty soon at this rate," said Burt, gleefully.

"Bet your life we will. We've taken in over \$20 since we came down here. Phil Jomby wasn't giving us any ghost story when he said the brokers were liberal."

"Where will we go now?"

"Up to New Street again."

Accordingly to New Street they went.

"Let's go in here at this broker's office and give them a tune," suggested Al.

"We'll get fired out, as sure as you live," objected Burt.

"Who says we will?"

"I say so. We haven't any right to go in there. They might have us arrested."

"Go on! They can't do more than ask us to leave."

"Don't try it. Let's quit for the day. We've made enough."

"Well, let's go in and look around. I'd like to see what a broker's office looks like."

"I'll do that, but no music, remember."

"All right. We won't make a sound."

They entered the office, which was right off the street, and were taking in the outer office when a sandy-haired boy with stuck-up manners came out of the broker's private office. He noticed the two young musicians at once. He recognized them as the boys he had seen playing on Broad Street, and it struck him that they had come in there to play, too.

"Well, if they haven't a nerve!" he muttered. "I'll soon give them the bounce."

With that he walked up to Al in a threatening way.

"Here, you two, take a sneak, will you? We won't have no street fakirs in here."

"Who are you calling street fakirs?" demanded Al, indignantly.

"You. I seen you playing' in front of the Exchange, and a cop moved you on."

"Well, don't worry, we didn't come in here to play," said Al.

"I'll bet you didn't. Get out or I'll kick you out."

"I don't think you will. It wouldn't be healthy for you to try it," answered Al in a resolute tone.

"What's that?" roared the sandy-headed boy.

At that moment a pretty girl came out of the private room. She stopped and watched the altercation. Al gave the youth a half contemptuous look.

"Are you the boss of this office?" he asked sarcastically.

"No, I ain't the boss. Are you goin' to get out?"

Al gave him another look, and turning to his companion said:

"Come on, Burt, I guess we'll retire or something might happen."

As they turned toward the door the office boy gave Al a rude shove which nearly caused him to drop his violin. Al turned like a flash and struck his aggressor a heavy blow in the face which badly damaged his left optic. The youth uttered a loud outcry which brought the broker from his office.

"I'll fix you for that!" snarled the office boy, shaking his fist at Al.

"What's the meaning of this racket?" demanded Mr. Parker, grabbing Al by the arm.

"He slugged me in the eye," whined the sandy-haired messenger.

"That boy is not to blame," said Bessie Brown coming forward. "Clarence Burns was the aggressor."

"What did you do to this lad, Clarence?" asked the broker.

"Told 'em to get out with their music, and then that feller hit me."

"Will you permit me to explain, sir?" asked Al.

"Certainly. I recognize you and your companion now as the boys who played such fine music in front of the Exchange this morning."

"And I recognize, you, sir, as the gentleman who gave me fifty cents," replied Al politely. "I take this opportunity to thank you for your liberality."

CHAPTER V.—Luck Strikes Al and Burt.

"Come into my private office," said the broker beamingly. "I'd like to talk with you both. You can explain there the trouble you had with my messenger."

The gentleman, to Clarence Burns' surprise and disgust, led the young musicians into his sanctum.

"Now you may tell me why you found it necessary to strike Burns," he said to Al, motioning the boys to seats.

Al told him how he and his companion, who were strangers in the city, had entered his office just to look around and see what a broker's office looked like. While they were doing this, he went on, the sandy-haired boy came out into the room, called them street fakirs and ordered them out of the office in a very insulting way.

"As we didn't care to create trouble," added Al, "we started to go when that boy followed me up and gave me a shove toward the door, causing me to almost drop my violin. I am not accustomed to take that kind of treatment from anybody, so I turned about and struck him in the face. That's the whole story, sir."

"I must admit that my messenger is not a very polite boy," said the broker. "I accept your statement as the truth and will apologize for him."

"It isn't necessary, sir. I suppose we had no right to enter your office merely out of curiosity."

"You were perfectly welcome to do it. Now will you oblige me with your names?"

"Yes, sir. Mine is Al Britton and my friend's name is Burt Hale."

"And my name is Forest Parker. Now we are acquainted. You are both excellent performers on your instruments. I am a good judge of music, and I know that you can play standard airs in splendid style. Undoubtedly you are not ordinary street players. Will you tell me how you came to adopt that mode of earning a living?"

"We only started in at it this morning. That was the first time we played in public when you saw us in front of the Exchange," replied Al.

"The first time!" ejaculated the broker, somewhat surprised.

"Yes, sir. We only arrived in the city from Albany last night. We worked our way down the river as deckhands on the Day Line boat Albany."

"Well, well; is that so? So you both hail from Albany, eh?"

"We do to a certain extent. We met each other in that town, and roomed there together."

"You have parents, have you not?"

"No, sir. Neither has Burt. We're orphans, turned out on the world to hoe our own way. And we're going to do it. We came to New York to make money, and judging by what we've earned to-day I think we'll come out all right."

"Do you expect to keep this street playing up?"

"For a while, yes."

The broker shook his head.

"I should not advise you to do it. To all appearances you have been well brought up. Your conversation shows that you have enjoyed at least a good common school education. You have both a fine talent for music, and it is fairly well developed, as well as could reasonably be expected at your age. Now, how would you like to enter Wall Street at the bottom of the ladder and work yourselves up?"

"We should like it very well indeed," replied Al.

"Well, I've been thinking for some time of getting rid of my boy, Clarence. He has been with me only about six months, but he acts as though he owned the office. I am tired of his methods. I have now made up my mind to ship him at the end of the week, so if you want to step into his shoes just say so and the position is yours."

"Thank you, Mr. Parker, I shall be glad to take it if you have decided to get a new boy; but how about my friend, Burt? Do you think you could do anything for him?"

"I think I can," replied the gentleman. "A particular friend of mine, a Wall Street broker, is about to lose his messenger. I will give your friend a note of recommendation to him, and he can call on him right away."

Burt thanked Broker Parker on his own behalf.

"That's all right, my lad. I always like to boost a good cause. Now, Britton, you and your friend had better devote your time between this and next Monday morning to learning the lay of the land and the ins and outs of the financial district, so as to be ready to take hold at once. You had better report here Saturday noon as I want to give you a general idea of your duties, and let you know what will be expected of you."

"All right, sir. I'll be on hand," replied Al.

The broker returned to his desk, wrote a letter of introduction and recommendation for Burt to present to William Smith, stock broker, of No.—Wall Street, and handed it to him.

"Now, before you go, you boys might play me something in your best vein. I am very fond of music, that is, good music, and as business is over for the day, as far as I am concerned, I can stand a little light recreation."

Just then there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," said the broker.

Whereupon the door opened and William Smith walked in.

"You've come just in time, Smith, to hear some fine music. Before you begin, young man," he added to Burt, "allow me to introduce you to Mr. Smith, the gentleman for whom the note I gave you is intended. Hand it to him now."

But got up and passed the envelope to the newcomer.

"What's this?" asked Smith, somewhat puzzled.

"It's a note introducing that boy to you," said Parker. "I want you to give him a trial as messenger. You told me that you were looking around for a new one."

Smith glanced over the note.

"Call at my office in the morning about half-past nine, and I will talk to you."

"Very well, sir," replied Al's chum.

"Now, then, we'll have the music, that is, unless you've something particular to say to me, Smith."

"No, I merely dropped in to see if you were ready to go uptown."

"We'll go as soon as these artists have obliged," replied Parker. "This one," indicating Al, "I've just engaged as messenger to replace Clarence Burns, who has got to think that he's doing me a great favor by carrying my notes around the district. As I have no use for such an ornament in my office, why, he's got to go. Now, then, my boys, we're ready to listen to you."

After a consultation with his chum Al started up Mendelssohn's "Spring Song."

He played it, with some assistance from Burt, in fine style, and at its conclusion the two brokers applauded him without stint. The two boys then played "Swanee River" with great expression, and finished their performance with "Home, Sweet Home."

The clerks in the office did very little work while the music was going on, for it was certainly very taking. Clarence Burns missed it, for he had gone home early, but he wouldn't have appreciated it if he had heard it. He also missed getting notice of his bounce until the following morning. The two brokers thanked the boys for their artistic performance, and then the lads made their bows and departed.

"Gee! But we have fallen into great luck," said Burt, as soon as they were on the street once more. "You've got a job with Mr. Parker, and the chances are that I will catch on with Mr. Smith. Things couldn't have turned out better for us. It was a fortunate thing that we walked into that office."

"You mean it was a fortunate thing that Clarence Burns acted the way he did towards us—especially me. That drew Mr. Parker's attention to us and the rest followed. You're as good as hired by Mr. Smith, so we may both consider ourselves anchored in the Wall Street district. We'll soon learn the ropes, and after a little while we'll be in a position to make our first venture on the stock market."

The boys found their way back to Mrs. Bragg's house off Canal Street, but before going to their room they took their supper at a nearby restaurant. Al changed his pocketful of loose coin at the restaurant for bills, and then divided the day's earnings with Burt. Each now had a little over \$15 apiece, and that was more than sufficient to carry them over to their first pay day. When they reached their room they placed the cases containing their instruments under the bed, then they turned in for a good night's rest.

CHAPTER VI.—Al Stands no Nonsense.

At nine o'clock next morning the boys walked down to Wall Street. They got down in time for

Burt to call at Mr. Smith's office, which was on the second floor of a new office building. Al waited in the corridor downstairs for his chum to return, which he did after an absence of fifteen minutes.

"How did you make out—all right?" asked Al.

"Yes. I'm hired on trial; but I'm going to make good if I break a leg."

"That's the way to talk, old man. You'll come out all right. What did he have to say to you?"

Burt gave him the substance of his interview with Broker Smith.

"Well, now we'll follow Mr. Parker's suggestion and get acquainted with the financial district."

The boys spent a good part of the day walking around the neighborhood, getting acquainted with the names and locations of the more important office buildings, where they judged they would have to carry notes. Then they walked down to the Battery and wound up the afternoon there. Next day they made themselves familiar with the streets as far up as the Brooklyn Bridge, and eastward to the river. The following day was Saturday, and at noon Al reported to Mr. Parker's office for instructions. He met Clarence Burns face to face and the latter gave him a deep scowl. Half an hour later when he left the office Clarence was waiting for him outside.

"So you had me fired, did you?" snarled the late messenger in a tone of hate. "And you've taken my place, too. Well, you'll wish you hadn't butted in here before you're a week older."

Without waiting for a reply, Clarence turned his back on Al and walked away.

"What was the matter with him?" asked Burt, coming up.

"Got a grouch on because he's lost his job, and he's got his dagger into me because I've taken his place," replied Al.

"He can't blame you for taking his position, for he would have lost it, anyway, whether you took the job or not."

"He doesn't look at it in that light."

"What did he say to you?"

Al told him.

"He intends to try and get back at you. Don't you care. Just you keep your eyes skinned for him, and if he tries on any funny business with you lay him out in a way that he won't forget in a hurry, then he'll let you alone in the future."

"He won't catch me off my guard if I can help myself, bet your boots. If he tries on any monkey shines he'll wish he didn't, you can gamble on that," said Al in a tone that showed he would take no nonsense from Clarence Burns, or any one else.

Al and Burt started in as messengers at their respective offices on Monday morning at nine o'clock. Both were full of ambition to get ahead, and before the week was out had made themselves solid with their bosses. On Saturday morning when Parker and Smith met at the Exchange, the latter said:

"That boy you recommended to me is a jewel. He is as polite as a dancing-master and as bright and chipper as a lark. I like him very much."

"Glad you're satisfied with him, Smith. His companion, Al Britton, who succeeded my late messenger, is a corker and no mistake. Judging

from his work so far I wouldn't exchange him for any boy in Wall Street."

"For strangers in New York they've caught on uncommonly quick," said Smith.

"That's right. My boy has the district down as fine as silk. He hasn't lost any time in getting around, and he hasn't made a mistake in delivering a message."

"Same with young Hale. He's there every time with both feet."

"We have good reason to congratulate ourselves on such valuable acquisitions to our offices. Well, Smith, what do you think about P. & D. this morning?"

Smith said he thought the stock was slated for a boom, and the two brokers proceeded to figure up the outlook of the market. While they were talking together on the floor, the two new messengers who were giving them so much satisfaction were out on errands. Like two fleet-footed Mercuries on the wing they were both annihilating time and space in the interest of their employers. Al bounced into the office of George Floyd, a broker in the Mills Building, with an important message. He was admitted to the private office where he found the gentleman busy at his desk. The broker looked at him and then tore open the envelope and read the message.

"Have you taken the place of that sandy-haired boy who has been carrying messages for Parker for some time?"

"You mean Clarence Burns? Yes, sir," replied Al politely.

"Humph! You seem to be an improvement on him at any rate. I never could see how Parker stood for him. I wouldn't have him in my office as a gift. What's your name?"

"Al Britton."

The broker scribbled something on a pad, tore off the sheet, enclosed it in an envelope, addressed it and handed it to Al.

"There's your answer," said Floyd. "By the way, do you smoke?"

"Smoke, sir!" exclaimed Al in surprise.

"Yes—cigarettes. I notice most of the messengers do."

"No, sir."

"Haven't acquired the habit yet, then?"

"No, sir; and I don't expect to."

"Good for you. Stick to that resolution if you can."

"I mean to."

"If you ever take to smoking—when you get older, I mean—get a pipe."

"I hope to get along without a pipe, sir, or even cigars."

"You'll be an exception to the rule if you do. Good-morning."

Al hurried back to his office, and on his arrival the cashier told him to take the note around to the Exchange and deliver it to Mr. Parker. The boy lost no time in doing so. When he reached the messengers' entrance he inquired for his employer and an attache went out on the floor to find Mr. Parker. There were a number of messengers waiting to deliver notes to brokers. One of them, a tough-looking, red-headed boy, looked at Al pretty hard.

"Are you the feller who got Clarence Burns fired?" he said rudely.

"I'm not aware that I had any hand in his discharge," replied Al coolly.

"He said you did."

"I'm not responsible for what he says."

"It's against the rules down here for a boy to get another bounced."

"What rules?"

"Our rules."

"What do you mean by 'our rules'?"

"Don't get too lippy, young feller. You'll find 'em out soon enough. You're on the blacklist."

"Am I?" smiled Al.

"We'll give you a week to resign from your job."

"A week?" replied Al with another smile.

"Yes, a week. D've understand?" said the red-headed boy offensively.

"No, I don't understand. If you're a friend of Burns and are trying to intimidate me, you're only wasting your breath. I'm in Wall Street to stay."

"Oh, you're goin' to stay, are you?"

"That's what I said."

"Have you got any particular hospital you'd like to be sent to?"

"Have you?"

"Look here, I'll punch you in the snoot if you get gay with me!" said the red-headed boy angrily.

"You must be a person of some importance from the way you talk."

"You wait till I catch you outside somewhere handy and I'll show you who and what I am."

Al sized the insolent youth up and decided that he was a hard proposition, but he wasn't afraid of him, just the same.

"Very well," he replied quietly, "if you're looking for trouble I can't help it."

"Maybe you think you can lick me?" said the other aggressively.

"I'm not giving the matter any thought."

"I can knock the stuffin' out of you with one hand, and I'm goin' to do it."

"Do you try to pick a fight with every new boy down here?"

"None of your business. You're a fresh guy and you'll get all that's comin' to you. Understand?"

At that moment Mr. Parker came to the railing and Al handed him the envelope he got from Broker Floyd. He read it and dismissed Al with a nod. Al turned to leave the building when the red-headed boy suddenly put out his foot and the young messenger tripped over it. Quick as a flash Al wheeled around and planted his fist in the fellow's eye, and followed it up with a blow from his other fist in the jaw. The red-headed boy went down in a heap on the floor. Knowing that the Exchange was no place to engage in a scrap, Al walked quickly outside and hastened back to his office.

CHAPTER VII.—Al and Bessie Brown.

At half-past twelve Al got his first pay envelope from the cashier. Mr. Parker hadn't told him what wages he was to get, so Al opened the envelope with some curiosity. It contained seven dollars.

"That isn't so bad. I had an idea it might be

five or six. I guess I can live on seven dollars a week. I hope Burst gets as much."

At one o'clock all hands were ready to leave the office and began to depart, singly and in pairs. As Al put on his hat Bessie Brown came out of the counting-room on her way home. She stopped and looked at Al with a smile.

"How do you like your work?" she asked him.

"First-rate, Miss Bessie. I'm trying my best to give satisfaction."

"I heard you were doing very nicely."

"I'm glad to hear that. It encourages a fellow to keep up to the mark."

"You're a great improvement on Clarence Burns."

"Thank you for the compliment."

"I never liked him. He annoyed me a great deal. Hung around my desk when I was busy, and pestered me with his talk, which was very silly."

"I will try not to imitate him."

"I don't think you could. I shall be glad to talk to you once in a while when the opportunity occurs. Whenever you have anything to say to me don't be afraid to come in and say it. I am usually at liberty between half-past twelve and one. I eat my lunch in the office. We can have a little chat together then when you are not busy yourself."

"Thank you, I will," replied Al, raising his hat as she passed out into New Street.

When he followed he saw Burt waiting for him on the other side of the way. There was also a small crowd of boys a few steps away, prominent among whom was the boy with the red hair. His right eye was in mourning from the blow administered by Al at the Exchange, and he looked ugly enough to sour milk. Clarence Burns was also in the group, and he didn't look pleasant, either. But ran across to meet Al.

"I'm afraid you're in for trouble," he said to his chum.

"How so?" Al asked him.

"Clarence Burns and his crowd appear to be waiting for you."

"I see them. Do you notice that big chap with the red hair?"

"Yes. He's got a black eye and looks tough."

"I gave him that eye."

"You did!" cried Burt in surprise.

"I did, and in the Exchange entrance, too."

"How did you come to have trouble with him?"

Al explained what had occurred between him and the tough lad.

"Then he and the others have come here to have it out with you."

"I shall avoid a fight if I can. If it's forced on me I guess I can take care of myself, but if more than one of them tackles me I look to you to back me up."

"I'll do it."

"Come on, then. We'll walk up to Wall."

The boys started. The crowd on the other side appeared to be waiting for them to make a move. As soon as they saw which way Al and his chum were heading they crossed over to intercept them. At the same moment an officer in plain clothes—one of the Wall Street detectives of the district—came out of an office building. He regarded Clarence Burns and his bunch with some suspicion, and stopped to see where they were going. The

red-headed youth walked up to Al, who, with Burt, stopped and looked at him.

"I'm goin' to give you the biggest lickin' you ever got in your life," he said fiercely, shoving his clenched fist toward Al's face.

"Smash him, Curley!" cried one of his crowd.

"Kick the stuffin' outer him!" said another.

"Paste him in the snoot!" advised another excited lad.

"Let me get at him, too!" said Clarence, pushing forward.

The red-headed boy, whose name was Mike Finn, but familiarly known as Curley, proceeded to carry out his threat. What he lacked in science he made up in strength and ferocity, but Al had taken boxing lessons from a professor in his native town, and being as strong and active as a small wildcat, he was fully a match for his heavier aggressor. There was a quick exchange of blows between them. Al's knuckles flattening out Curley's nose, and then the detective took a hand in the scrimmage. The crowd scattered and ran up and down the street, all except Finn and Burns. The officer had both of them by the collar of their jackets.

"It's the station-house for both of you chaps. Do you wish to make a charge of assault against them?" he asked Al.

"No," replied the young messenger.

"What's the trouble between you and these boys?"

"They're down on me for reasons of their own. This one, whose name is Clarence Burns, was discharged from Broker Parker's office last Saturday. I took his place, and he's got it in for me for that reason. The other fellow is one of his friends who has taken up his cause, and threatened to do me up unless I gave up my position. That's the basis of the whole trouble."

"What have you to say to that?" asked the detective, looking at Curley and Burns alternately.

"Nothin'," replied Finn sulkily.

Clarence remained silent with a scared look on his face.

"Well, I'm going to lock you both up for disturbing the peace," said the officer.

Burns began to whimper at that, while Curley looked defiant.

"Better let them go, officer, if they'll promise to let me alone in the future," said Al.

"Will you promise to behave yourselves hereafter?" asked the detective. "Remember, I'll have my eye out for you."

Clarence was willing to promise anything to get off, but it went against Finn's grain to make any concessions. He saw he'd have to make the promise or go to the station, so he did so with very bad grace.

"If I catch you laying for this lad again I'll put you through, both of you," said the detective sternly, as he released them. "Now, make yourselves scarce."

They took advantage of the chance to get away from the spot as fast as possible, but both registered a vow to get even with Al at some other time and place. Al and Burt then continued on to Wall Street, and thence to Broadway, where they took a car for uptown.

They were going to hunt up a better lodging-house than the one off Canal Street, which was not just to their liking.

They found a very comfortable room on West Twenty-sixth Street for \$3.50 per week, and they took it.

An hour later they had removed their personal belongings to their new home.

CHAPTER VIII.—Al and Burt Get in on the Market with Satisfactory results.

Al had not been a month in Parker's office ere he was pretty thoroughly posted about the operations going on down in Wall Street.

He had improved on the good impression he made on his employer during the first week, and the broker told Smith that he wouldn't lose him for a farm.

He also made himself a prime favorite with the cashier and clerks in the counting-room, and particularly with Bessie Brown.

One day he brought her in a pound box of chocolates and presented it to her.

"Aren't you good," she said, flashing a coquettish glance at him that fully repaid him for the money he had laid out on the candy.

He laughed and walked away, for Mr. Parker rang for him at that moment.

Al now began to see chances to make a little money in the stock market, but he and Burt had not been able to save up the important \$50 as yet.

They found that it took about every cent of their \$7 wages to cover their expense account.

They attracted some attention at their lodgings by the sweet music they drew from their instruments of an evening when they didn't go out.

One evening a wholesale clerk, Frank Evans, who occupied the front square room on their floor, knocked at their door while they were playing and walked in at their invitation.

He had already made their acquaintance through meeting them on the stairs.

"You play such fine music that I took the liberty of butting in on you to hear it more plainly. Are you professionals?"

"Oh, no; we just play to amuse ourselves. We work in Wall Street."

"Indeed! Well, you play as good as professionals. Will you let me hear something in the dance music line?"

Al and Burt struck up one of Strauss's waltzes.

"That was fine," said Evans, when they finished. "Can you play music for a square dance?"

Al said they could.

"Say, a cousin of mine who lives in a private house uptown is going to give a party next week, and I promised her I'd get a couple of musicians to provide the music for dancing. I'll give you boys \$5 if you'll come up with me, and play for the company."

Al looked at his chum and saw that he was willing to accept the offer.

"How long will we have to play?" asked Al.

"Not later than one o'clock. Say from nine till one, with an hour's intermission for supper."

"We'll accept," said Al.

"Good. I'll take you up with me, and I'll give you the money before we start."

Evans then told Al that he could put them in the way of making extra money with their instru-

ments, and Al replied that they'd be glad of the chance, as they were trying to save up their money for a certain purpose. On the following Wednesday evening Al and Burt accompanied Evans to his cousin's home on Eighty-third Street, and played there during the evening.

They were treated very nicely and made quite a hit. Evans got them an engagement at a political club on the following Saturday, and they received \$6 for the night. Inside of the next two weeks they added another \$10 to their capital, which now amounted to \$53. Al now began to watch the market closer than ever. It wasn't long before he overheard a couple of brokers in an office he visited with a note talking about a combination of capitalists that had been formed to boom L. & M. stock. The shares were just then selling low in the market owing to a recent decline all along the line. Al and Burt consulted and the result was that next day Al went up to the little bank on Nassau Street and bought five shares of the stock on a 10 per cent. margin, at 46, putting up the \$50 as margin. Thereafter both boys watched the tape in their respective offices whenever they got the chance, and a few days later the stock began to rise slowly. A week from the time they bought it the price had gone to 52.

Next day it made a sudden jump to 54, soon after the Exchange opened, and great excitement ensued on the floor. The traders began falling over themselves in their efforts to buy it, and under this impetus it went right up to 60 that day. By noon next day it was going at 65, and Al began to think it was time to sell out. When he was called into the private office to take a note to a broker on Wall Street, he heard Mr. Parker tell a gentleman who was with him that he had better sell out his holdings in L. & M., as the price was liable to tumble any moment. That convinced Al that he couldn't get rid of the five shares any too quick. After delivering the note to the broker in Wall Street he rushed up to the little bank and ordered the five shares sold at once. It was done inside of fifteen minutes, and an hour later L. & M. took a slump that brought a small panic about on the Exchange. Al didn't care, for he knew that he and his chum were out of it, and that their profits amounted to about \$100 after all the expenses had been deducted. On the following morning he received the bank's check for \$151, which included the \$50 he had put up for the margin.

"This is a good beginning, at any rate," he said to himself, with a feeling of great satisfaction. "Burt and I are now worth \$154. We'll be able to buy 15 shares next time a good thing comes our way."

A few days afterward Al overheard two of the clerks in the office talking about O. & W.

"You can take the tip straight from me that it's going up in a few days," said one of them, whose name was Richards.

"How do you know it is?" asked the other, a dapper young chap named Curtis.

"I got the pointer from Williams, the secretary of the company," replied Richards.

"That's all right; but can you depend on it?"

"I can. I've done many a favor for Williams, and he handed me the tip to kind of square the score."

"What is going to cause the stock to rise?"

"I couldn't tell you. Williams wouldn't give that away. All he told me was to put every cent I could rake together on O. & W. It is going at 82 now. He advised me to hold on to it till it reached par, or a point or two above, and then get rid of it. So, if you can a few hundred dollars I advise you to take advantage of this chance to double your money."

The clerks talked about the stock a while longer and then returned to their work.

Al thought over what he had just heard, and the result of his deliberations was that he got his envelope out of the safe, extracted his certificate of deposit, and at the first chance he got that day he went to the little bank and bought 15 shares of O. & W. at 82.

Inside of two days it began to rise, and a week later it passed par, amid great excitement on the Exchange. Al then ordered his 15 shares sold, and afternoon reported the fact to Burt.

"How much profit will we make?" asked his chum.

"I figure that it went at a fraction above 101. That will give us \$19 a share profit, or something over \$280.

"That's fine," replied Burt. "We'll have a capital of over \$400 as soon as you collect the money from the bank."

"Yes, close on to \$450."

CHAPTER IX.—The Tall, Thin Man Again.

Two weeks later Burt came into Parker's office looking for Al.

His chum was just going out with a message to a broker in the Johnston Building on Wall Street.

"You look excited, Burt. What's the matter?" asked Al.

"I've got hold of a tip," said Burt.

"Have you really got one at last? Let's hear what it is."

"I heard a broker tell Mr. Smith today that a pool had been formed to boom the K. & P. road. He named over several of the people who are in the pool, and he said Broker Castleton is going to do the buying."

"That looks as if there would be something doing in K. & P. shortly. There have been hints lately in the papers about a consolidation of the D. & W. with the K. & P., but I put it down as so much moonshine. Such reports bob up at intervals about this road or that one, and they are either officially denied or amount to nothing in the end. I doubt if there is any truth in the report I have mentioned."

"Well, we want to get in on K. & P. right away, for the stock is going to be corned, and when it gets scarce the price is bound to go skyward," said Burt.

"You are sure your information can be relied upon?"

"Sure as I'm standing here."

"All right. I'll buy 40 shares of it right away and we'll see how we come out."

Al bought the shares that afternoon, when they were on their way home, putting up \$400 margin.

The next time he went to the Exchange he saw Broker Castleton buying the stock from everybody who offered it.

The price continued to hang around 75, the figure at which Al bought it, for several days, then like the other stocks in which he had been interested, it began to rise by degrees, not enough, however, to attract any amount of marked attention. It got up to 80 before the brokers began to get interested in it. A good many traders then began making purchases of it. Before long it became noticeably scarce. The pool had succeeded in getting control of the bulk of it. The price rose to 85 in short order, and that caused a big flurry around the K. & P. pole. The public now began giving orders to the brokers for the stock, but it was so hard to get that the traders had to bid above the market right along to bring any of it out.

The pool wouldn't let any out at that stage of the game, but its broker bought as many additional shares as he could get at the higher price. In this way the capitalists interested in the boom succeeded in effecting a corner, and after that the pool had things all its own way. The price soared right up to 95, and the newspapers said that it would go above par in a day or two. They proved to be good prophets, for inside of two days it was quoted at 102.

"I guess we'll sell out," said Al to Burt, when the boys came together that afternoon. "The stock looks top-heavy to me. The insiders, judging from the amount of sales recorded today, are cashing in. We don't want to be caught in the shuffle, you know."

Burt agreed that a bird in the band was worth several dozen in the bush, so Al left his order to sell at the bank as they went home. When he got the bank's statement and check he saw that the stock had been sold for 102 1-8, and that their profit amounted to \$1,085. Their combined capital now amounted to \$1,525. Al took out a certificate of deposit for \$1,500 and divided the \$25 between himself and Burt.

"We're coming to the front fast, Al," said Burt, as they sat in their room that evening after their return from a Sixth Avenue restaurant. "I tell you \$1,500 is a whole lot of money for us two to be worth, and we've made it all in a short time, too."

"And we can lose it all in a much shorter time if we don't look out," replied Al, with a chuckle.

"I hope we won't," answered Burt, with a startled look.

Although Al and Burt kept their eyes and ears on the lookout for another winning tip, not the ghost of one turned up. Booms came and booms went, leaving shoals of unfortunate "lambs" high and dry on the lee shore of Wall Street, and but few with pocketbooks of increased size, and yet that \$1,500 certificate of deposit still roosted in Mr. Parker's safe untouched. The two boys had now been over eight months in New York, and what they didn't know about the stock market and Wall Street methods, in their own opinion, would have made a small book. One spring morning Al was hustling up Exchange Place on his way back to his office on New Street. He was coming from the Exchange, where a big boom had suddenly collapsed, and a panic of no small proportions had set in. Never before had Al seen the floor in such an uproar as it was that morning.

The brokers were acting like a lot of lunatics in

the yard of an asylum who had got into a general scrap over something. The noise they made was simply deafening, and could be heard away out on Broad Street. The reverberation made by the Falls of Niagara was scarcely in it with them. Fortunes were swept away every few minutes, and the losers staggered around dazed by their losses, while the winners, those on the short side, displayed their glee in ghoulish yells that shattered the echoes of the big building. Among the brokers who had been caught in the slump that morning was Seymour Atherton. He was a stout, pompous-looking man, believed to be quite wealthy. He had lost his customary pompous look when he issued from the Exchange and took his way up Exchange Place right ahead of Al. He now looked like a man who had lost all interest in life, for he had lost heavily on D. P. & Q.—no one could say how much, in fact, he didn't know himself. Almost reeling like a drunken man he staggered back to his handsome office in the Vanderpool Building, muttering incoherently to himself. Suddenly he stopped, clapped one of his hands to his forehead and swayed from side to side.

"My gracious!" exclaimed Al, who knew the broker well. "What's the matter with Mr. Atherton?"

The broker staggered a few feet and seemed about to fall. Al sprang forward, put one arm around his waist and tried to support him. Atherton was a heavy weight, and too much for the boy to sustain when his limbs gave way under him.

With a groan he sank in an unconscious state to the sidewalk. Several brokers and other spectators of the incident rushed forward to see what was the matter, and a crowd soon collected about Al and Mr. Atherton. Among those who appeared to be uncommonly solicitous about the unconscious broker's condition was a tall, thin man. His anxiety, however, seemed to be chiefly confined to the pockets of the stricken gentleman, but in the excitement no one seemed to notice the fact.

"Someone ought to 'phone for a doctor or an ambulance," suggested Al.

"That's right," said one of the brokers present. "I'll run into my office here and communicate with the nearest hospital."

As he pushed his way through the crowd Al's eye rested momentarily on the tall, thin man. He recognized him in a moment as the individual who had lifted the Italian's pocketbook on the Day Line steamer Albany and got away with it. Just now the tall man was repeating the same operation on the insensible broker, for the boy saw him pulling a wallet out of the hip pocket of the prostrate man.

"You thief!" muttered Al. "I'm on to you."

As the crook started to make his way from the crowd the young messenger did likewise, close at his heels. As soon as the rascal had extricated himself he started toward New Street. Al caught up with him at the corner.

"Hold on a moment," said the boy, grabbing him by the arm.

The fellow turned with a guilty start.

"What do you want?" he growled, seeing that it was only a boy who had stopped him.

"I want that wallet you took from that gentleman's hip pocket just now," replied Al, resolutely.

"What do you mean, you young fool?" he snarled, with a venomous glance. "Do you think I am a thief?"

"No, I don't think so—I know you are."

"How dare you accuse me of such a thing?"

"Because I saw you take it. It isn't the first time, either, that you've lifted a pocketbook in my presence, though you managed to get away all right the other time."

"You little liar!" roared the crook, raising his hand and striking Al a heavy blow across the face that sent him staggering back to the corner building.

When Al recovered from the blow the tall, thin man was making off down New Street at a fast walk. Al was a plucky boy, and he didn't propose to be shaken off if he could help it. Aside from the present bare-faced robbery, he had it in for the tall crook for the affair on the steamer Albany. So he started after the man on the run. The rascal saw him coming and took to his heels at once, for he did not want to abandon his prize, and as long as he had it on his person there was trouble ahead for him if he was turned over to the police.

CHAPTER X.—Al Gets A Present and He and Burt Make Another Haul in the Market.

"Stop thief!" shouted Al. "Stop that man!"

New Street between Exchange Place and Beaver Street was not overburdened with pedestrians at that moment, and the few who were passing along hardly understood Al before the tall crook got safely by them. The young messenger could run some, and he gained on the man, although the rascal had long legs to help him over the ground. At Beaver Street the fellow turned toward Broadway, hoping to lose himself in the crowd on that thoroughfare. Al, surmising his object, got a spurt on, and began to close up the space between them.

The crook reached Broadway some little way in advance, but not far enough to elude his pursuer, who clung to his track with a bulldog tenacity. Al saw him cut across Broadway and run up toward Thames Street. The boy followed him over. Both were soon running down Thames Street toward the elevated railroad, with a hundred feet between them. Al had reduced that space by one-half when the crook reached the corner of New Church Street.

"Stop thief!" roared Al once more.

The tall man rushed around the corner and slap into the arms of a big policeman. Before either recovered from the shock of the impact the boy was beside them.

"Catch that man!" cried Al, making a dive for the rascal's arm. He's a thief."

The officer grabbed the fellow by his jacket, and in another moment Al also had hold of him by the arm. The crook put up a desperate resistance, but the cop alone was more than his master. Finally he yielded sullenly, and furtively tossed the wallet into the gutter. Al's sharp eyes followed the movement, and he quickly recovered the pocketbook.

"There's the evidence of his guilt," said the messenger, holding the wallet up. "He tried to get rid of it, but he wasn't sharp enough for me."

Al then told his story briefly to the policeman, giving his own name and business address. The officer decided that the accused would have to go to the Church Street station, and the boy accompanied them to make the charge. The sergeant at the desk heard Al's statement and then asked the crook what he had to say for himself. The fellow refused to say anything, so his pedigree was taken down on the blotter and he was locked up to be sent to the police court for examination before a magistrate. Al, satisfied that he had done the right thing, hurried back to his office where he explained the cause of his long absence to Mr. Parker. The broker complimented him on his pluck and sent him around to Atherton's office to see how the trader was, and, to tell him that the police were in possession of his pocketbook and the thief as well.

Al found Mr. Atherton lying on a lounge in his private room attended by a physician and his cashier. He had recovered his senses, but required rest and quiet. Al told his story to the cashier, answered such questions as that gentleman put to him, and then went back to his own office. That afternoon he attended the prisoner's examination in the Centre Street court, and gave his evidence in the case. He also told the story of the robbery of the Italian on the Albany day boat, and the magistrate instructed a court officer to investigate and verify it. The prisoner was held for the Grand Jury and sent to a cell in the Tombs. The court officer in a day or two saw the captain and first mate of the Albany. They recalled the robbery of the Italian on the boat during the previous summer, but they could not connect the tall, thin man with the crime, as they had not seen him.

While Al's story of the robbery could not be corroborated, it still formed, in the light of the present theft, a strong bit of circumstantial evidence against the prisoner. Several Headquarters detectives were sent to look at the rascal, and two of them identified him as a crook whose picture was in the Rogues' Gallery. That tightened the meshes around the fellow, whose name was believed to be Jake Stahl, though he gave another name at the time of his arrest. In due time he was tried, was defended by a lawyer provided by his friends, but was convicted and got three years up the river. As Al was leaving the court-room after the trial a tough-looking man sidled up to him at the door and told him that some day he'd be sorry for putting Stahl behind the bars.

"I don't think I will, no matter what happens," replied the boy defiantly. "That fellow is getting off easy. The next time he gets in trouble he may get all that's coming to him."

Thus speaking he walked off. When Mr. Atherton got his wallet back, which contained \$10,000 in bills, besides many valuable papers, he sent for Al and presented him with \$1,000 as a reward for his pluck and services in the affair. Al accepted it and thanked the broker for his liberality. One day a short time afterward Al discovered by accident that a dozen of the big traders of the Street had combined for the purpose of booming J. & D. stock. He made inquiries with respect to the road and learned enough to assure him that it would be a safe deal for him to go into. He told Burt about it and said that he was going to put up all their

capital on 150 shares of J. & D. at the market price of 56.

"All right," answered Burt, "go ahead. The sooner we make that million and a half the better I'll be satisfied."

So Al bought the 150 shares of J. & D. that afternoon, and he also purchased another 100 for his individual account with the \$1,000 he had received from Broker Atherton. If Al had only stopped to consider he would probably have realized he was taking rather desperate chances in putting up all his money and his chum's on a game that might at any moment turn in the wrong direction with a swiftness that would make his head swim. Whether it is that Dame Fortune admires the nerve of one who is willing to "go the whole hog" or not, certain it is Al's venture prospered from the start. Before he had control of the stock a week it had gone up to 60, and during the succeeding three days it kept on to 65.

"We are evidently the people," said Burt gleefully that night after supper.

"At present we are," replied Al, with a complacent grin.

"At present? What do you mean by that? Have you any suspicions that we shall not continue to be the boss messengers of the Street, both financially and otherwise? If you have I want to know your reasons therefor."

"You always want to know a whole lot more than I can tell you. Your thirst for unadulterated knowledge is something inexhaustible."

"Say, have you been studying a Webster's Unabridged lately?" grinned Burt.

"No. Why do you ask that?"

"Well, you seem to be using some big words—unadulterated and inexhaustible, for instance."

"What's the difference? You understand them, don't you, sonny?"

"At a pinch I do; but simple words sound better on my tympanum."

"Why don't you say ear? Everybody doesn't know that tympanum means the sounding-board of your ear."

"As long as you do that's all that is necessary."

"Well, let's get back to the original subject. J. & D. closed today at 65, which means that we are \$9 a share ahead of the Wall Street lottery, or about \$1,300 altogether. Individually I am \$900 better off than you."

"You mean you are \$1,900 better off than me. You'll get your \$1,000 back with your profits."

"That's correct. I'll need it, for I'm going to get married one of these days."

"Who are you going to marry?" chuckled Burt. "Bessie Brown?"

"Don't worry yourself about Bessie Brown," flushed Al.

"Oh, I'm not worrying about her. I leave that pleasant job to you. By the way, did you hear that Broker Flint's wife had left him?"

"I know she did. She died the other day."

"I mean she left him a hundred thousand dollars."

"You're getting funny, Burt. Cut it out, please. Such jokes pall on me. To return to the subject once more. How high do you suppose J. & D. is going?"

"Well, if I knew I think it would be money in our pockets. It may go to 75 from the present outlook."

"The members of the syndicate backing it are collectively worth over \$50,000,000, according to popular opinion. They ought to be able to corner that stock easily if they haven't already done so."

"They haven't cornered our 250 shares, at any rate. I should like to dump my share on them at par."

"I'll be satisfied if I get 75."

A knock at their door interrupted further discussion of J. & D. Frank Evans came in to see them, and when he turned up the next evening generally wound up with music. Next day there were high old times at the Exchange over J. & D. The "lambs," as usual, were flocking to Wall Street after a rising stock, and the brokers were the last persons in the world to put any obstacles in their way of getting all they could pay for. Usually when the "lambs" came in the insiders got out as soon as they got the price up as high as it was safe to force it. In the case of J. & D. 75 seemed to be the limit. As that was Al's limit, too, he followed the insiders and unloaded on somebody who wanted his shares bad enough to pay a fancy figure for them. He and Burt retired from the strenuous game with \$2,850 profit, while his personal profit amounted to \$1,900 more. The boys were now worth something over \$4,300, not speaking of Al's \$2,900. On the strength of his winnings Al bought Bessie a five-pound box of the best chocolates and presented them to her.

"Why, you extravagant boy!" she exclaimed, when he handed her the box. "I can't permit you to waste so much money on me."

"If I could find anything better than you to waste it on I might do so, but I don't think I could if I searched the city through," he replied.

"You certainly said that very nicely," she answered with a sweet smile; "but, honestly, Al, you mustn't spend your money on me this way."

"Why not? When I like a girl I want to treat her well. In my opinion there is nothing too good for you."

"But you can't afford it, Al," she replied with a smile and a blush.

"How do you know that I can't afford it?"

"Well, I imagine that you can't. You are only getting \$8 a week, and have to support yourself."

"I only get \$8 from the office; but I have other sources of revenue that you don't know about."

"Have you?" she said, opening her pretty eyes.

"I have. Eight dollars a week is about \$416 a year. Well, I made nearly five years' wages day before yesterday. If I can't afford to get you a five-pound box of candy on that I'd like to know why not."

"Why, how could you make five years' wages all at once?"

"If you want to learn all my secrets, Bessie, I know only one way by which you can do it."

"How is that?"

"By promising to marry me one of these days."

Bessie blushed furiously and turned her head away.

"Have I offended you?" he asked.

"No, but you mustn't talk such nonsense."

"I'm sorry that you consider it nonsense. I don't. But we'll change the topic as long as you don't like it."

She flashed him a look that made his heart jump, and then declared that she was too busy to

say anything more just then than to thank him for the candy.

CHAPTER XI.—The Night Attack.

Summer came around again and Al and Burt celebrated the first anniversary of their entree into New York with a good dinner at one of the high-class Sixth Avenue restaurants and the theatre roof garden afterward.

"I think we've done ourselves proud during this year, Al," said Burt on their way back to their lodging-house. "In addition to making a living for ourselves we have accumulated a fund of \$7,200, of which \$5,000 belongs to you."

"I don't think we have any kick coming, old chappie."

"Kick! I should say not. I hope our good fortune may continue."

"I don't think we've learned any particularly bad habits, either, although they say this is the fastest city in the country."

"Life is pretty swift here."

"It takes all our energies to keep up with things in Wall Street without trying to burn the candle at the other end, too."

"I should smile, it does. I've heard some funny people say that the average messenger boy may be well compared with the snail; but that's a gross libel on the fraternity. Messenger boys are not slow, as a rule. When one gets lazy he's apt to lose his job. You've got to keep up with the procession or quit."

As they approached their lodging-house in Twenty-sixth Street they heard somebody say, "There he is now."

Almost immediately six or eight boys dashed out of an areaway and sprang on Al and Burt. Only two of them tackled Burt, the others, headed by a red-headed youth, went for Al, who found himself surrounded by a small forest of fists all aimed at his head. For a moment the young messenger was staggered by the suddenness of the fierce attack made upon him, and then he got busy in his own defense. He struck out right and left while he dodged the blows showered upon him. After the first surprise was over Al showed the stuff he was made of, and he soon disconcerted his opponents. The leader of the attacking party proved to be Mike Finn, nicknamed Curley, and he was seconded by Clarence Burns and other members of their tough gang. Al's agility stood him in good stead, and his educated and sledge-hammer fists took the wind out of the young rascals who did their best to down him. They were handicapped by numbers, and in their eagerness and excitement they were continually interfering with one another. Every jab that Al made at them counted, for it landed on one or another of them. He backed up against the iron gate of one building so that the enemy could not attack him in the rear, and then he gave them much better than they handed out to him. Al, however, would probably have been overcome by force of numbers only that the approach of a policeman put the attacking party to flight.

"That's the worst scrap I've ever been in," said Al, breathing hard, as the officer came up.

"How did it happen that those young toughs attacked you?" inquired the policeman.

"They were laying for us, and jumped us un-

awares," replied Al. "Two of them I know. One of them is a Wall Street messenger, and the other was a messenger till he got fired and I took his place."

"Then it's a private grudge they have against you?"

"You can put it down as that. It's about a year old, and with the exception of a short scrap with the red-headed fellow in New Street, I have not been molested till tonight."

"I'd run one or two of them in if I got hold of them," said the officer as he passed on, while Al and Burt sprang up the steps to the front door of their lodging-house.

"Say, that was fierce," said Burt. "Was Curley Finn and Clarence Burns among those who went for you?"

"Yes. And Burns has a damaged nose to take home with him."

"Well, you look as if you'd been through a threshing machine."

"I feel like it, too," admitted Al, as they walked up to their room.

"You ought to have those two chaps arrested for assault."

"No, I'm not going to bother with them. I gave them enough to remember me by, you can bet your life; but I'm afraid they would have done me up if the cop hadn't come around. I don't mind an ordinary scrap, but when it comes to a mob jumping on you it is altogether too much of a good thing."

"I should say so."

When Al examined his injuries he found he had a cut lip, two cuts over his left eye, a sore jaw and badly skinned knuckles. Taken altogether, he had come off easy, considering what he had been up against. Next morning Bessie looked at him in surprise.

"What have you been doing to yourself, Al?"

"Nothing. It's what somebody else has been doing to me," he answered with a laugh.

"Why, what do you mean?"

Then Al told her how he and his chum had been celebrating the anniversary of their arrival in New York the night before, and how they had been attacked by a crowd of toughs just before they reached their lodging-house.

"You poor boy!" Bessie said sympathetically. "They must have hurt you dreadfully."

"I'll bet they didn't hurt me as much as I hurt them. I've been taught how to use my fists, and I used them last night for all they were worth," he grinned.

Later on when Mr. Parker called him into his room the broker scanned him closely and then said, with a shrewd smile:

"Were you hit by an automobile last night, young man?"

"No, sir."

"Maybe it was a street car, or erhaps a cab?"

"Neither, sir."

"Well, you look as if you'd been having an argument with something stronger than yourself."

Then Al explained how he got his contusions.

"So one of your aggressors was Clarence Burns, eh?"

"Yes, sir. He's sore on me because I got his job. The Saturday before I came to work he accused me of getting him discharged."

At that moment Broker Smith came in to see

Parker, and Al walked out to his seat. After that when he and Burns were out late they always kept a wary eye around when they approached their lodging-house. They were not molested again, however, and gradually their vigilance relaxed. About the middle of October Al got hold of another tip. He learned that two Western railroads that had been business rivals for several years were going to pool their traffic and restore their original freight and passenger rates. Both lines had been losing money right along and to keep the roads out of the hands of receivers their officials effected a compromise which had not yet been made public.

These roads were known as the N. & T. and the M. & N. In consequence of the rate-war their securities had been selling low in the market for some time, with little demand for them. Al bought 400 shares of M. & N. for his chum and himself, and 200 shares of N. & T. for his personal account. The former cost 62 and the latter 58. Then he and Burt began to watch for results. In a day or two an unconfirmed rumor of the business arrangement between the two roads was floating around the Street. Naturally attention was drawn to the stock of both roads and there was some lively trading done in their securities. M. & N. went up to 65 and N. & T. advanced to 61. About this time conditions brought about a general buoyancy in the market, and prices advanced all along the line. During that week there was a good deal of trading done in different stocks, with the outside public large buyers. When the Exchange closed on Saturday M. & N. was quoted at 68 and N. & T. at 65.

Sunday's papers contained alleged authoritative accounts of the consolidation of business interests for a term of years between the two Western roads. These statement sent the stock of both roads up a couple of points soon after the opening of the Exchange on Monday morning. At noon the pooling arrangement was officially confirmed, and then a big rush was made to purchase the stock of both roads. Those who had the stock were not anxious to let go of it at the prevailing price, so the bidding became very active, under which the stock of the roads advanced many points, M. & N. closing that afternoon at 75 and N. & T. at 74. Both stocks reached 80 by Tuesday noon, and Al concluded to sell out at that figure. He got a chance about one o'clock to run around to the little bank, and after waiting a few minutes in the line before the margin clerk's window handed in his order. Fifteen minutes later both he and his chum were out of the market. Their combined profit on M. & N. amounted to \$7,150, raising their capital to \$11,500, while Al's profit on 200 shares of N. & T. was \$4,300, bringing the amount of his private capital up to \$7,200.

CHAPTER XII.—Fortune's Wheel Turns One Way for Al and Burt, and Another for Their Employers.

Nothing happened during the next few months to alter the financial condition of Al and Burt, either for the better or the worse. The former saw chances where he thought he could make money if he had the time to devote to the matter, but as he didn't, he couldn't afford to take the risk involved. As for Burt, he did not take the

lead in any market venture. In his opinion Al knew a great deal more about stock deals than he did. He had worked five of them successfully so far, and Burt had perfect confidence in his chum's judgment. It was about this time that Al was sent by Mr. Parker to Staten Island to deliver some stock to one of his customers. He took the four o'clock boat to the island, and while sitting in the forward part of the boat enjoying the sail across the bay, which was new to him, he overheard a bunch of Curb brokers talking about the developments that were reported to have been made in a new Montana copper mine called the Tri-Mountain Copper Company.

The stock was selling on the market for \$5 a share, and in the opinion of the brokers it would go to \$10 within two weeks. Some of them had been loading up to the extent of several thousand shares that day, and the others announced that they were going to go in with both feet on the following morning. They were quite enthusiastic over the prospects of the mine, which was in the hands of a bunch of capitalists who knew how to manipulate such a good property to the best advantage. Before the boat reached its slip at the island Al had decided to get in on the stock, too.

He and his chum had money enough standing idle to purchase 2,000 shares outright, and Al believed that was the only way to go into the venture. Although it was a particularly mild winter day, it began to grow decidedly chilly as the boat neared Staten Island, and the sun got low down in the heavens. The brokers adjourned to the small bar on the boat, and Al went to the door of the engine-room to watch the machinery in action. It was long after dark when the young messenger got back to the city. He got his supper on his way up to his lodging-house, and when he reached the door of his room he heard Burt practicing a new tune on his mandolin.

"Hello, Al, where have you been?" asked Burt. "I waited some time on the corner for you to show up, but when you didn't I walked down to your office and inquired for you. That dude with the blonde mustache who handles the margin business at your place told me that he guessed you had gone home, but I knew you wouldn't go uptown without me, so I hung around a while on the outside. Finally I got tired and started up alone."

"Mr. Parker sent me to Staten Island on a little matter of business."

"Oh, that's what kept you. How did you like the trip?"

"First-class. By the way, I picked up a pointer on the boat."

"That so? What is it? Worth getting in on?"

"I think so. It's something different from anything we've tackled before."

"Let's hear what it is."

Al then told him the substance of the conversation he had overheard on the boat.

"I think it will pay us to buy a couple of thousand shares, not on margin, but outright," said Al.

"Well, if you think so, go ahead and buy them. If the stock goes up only one point we'd made \$2,000, and every little counts."

"Those traders are building on it going up at least five points."

"If it did that we'd double our investment."

"They seemed to have some inside information

about what is likely to happen, that's why I think it will be well worth our while to buy the stock right away and profit by the probable rise."

They talked the matter over a while and then devoted the balance of the evening to practice on their instruments, for they had several engagements to fill that month with people who were going to give parties at their houses. Next morning Al dropped in at the office of a well-known Curb broker and gave him the order to buy 2,000 shares of Tri-Mountain Copper. He transferred his certificate of deposit for \$11,500 on the little bank to the broker, which would leave a balance in the trader's hands after he had bought the stock. Later in the day he visited the broker's office again and found that the stock had been bought, but that the shares had not yet been delivered. He was told to call any time next day for them.

"I don't want to take them away at present," replied Al. "Just give me your receipt for them and the balance due me in cash."

Al got two receipts—one for the stock and the other for the money, and went back to his own office. So much Tri-Mountain stock changing hands called considerable attention to it, and led to inquiry among the Curb traders. It gradually developed that a boom in it was one of the probabilities in sight, and as a result a whole lot of trading was done in the stock and the price quickly advanced to \$6. On the following day it went up another dollar. Then accounts began to appear in the papers about fresh ore developments in the Tri-Mountain mine, and how new machinery was being installed to get the ore out in larger quantities. On the strength of these and other reports the stock went up to \$9. Trading continued strong in the shares, and the boys had little doubt that it would not only go to \$10, but higher than that figure.

While the attention of Al and Burt, aside from their business duties, was taken up with Tri-Mountain Copper, matters were developing that were going to have a considerable bearing on their future. A number of bull operators had combined to boom L. & M. stock, and Mr. Parker and Mr. Smith, the employers of our young messengers had been invited to come in and share the profits of the enterprise. Of course they were to share the losses, if any, as well; but the combination was not looking for losses. The members of the pool had figured out that they had a pretty sure thing of it, consequently they were not worrying about losing money.

But there's many a slip between the cup and the lip, especially in Wall Street. The best laid schemes of the sharpest and most experienced traders often go astray at the crucial moment. Things happen in the stock market that no man can provide against beforehand, and for that very reason a millionaire may find himself unexpectedly reduced to a comparative pauper in an hour. Mr. Parker and Mr. Smith went into the pool under conditions that seemed to warrant great expectations. They went the limit of their available resources. They went in up to the neck, just as, unknown to them, their messengers were about up to their necks in Tri-Mountain Copper.

When Tri-Mountain Copper reached \$9 a share Al and Burt shook hands in self-congratulation.

When L. & M. boomed up twenty points in the course of ten days Parker and Smith shook hands and congratulated each other on what they were going to make. One morning about eleven o'clock the Curb was in a state of uproar over the advance of Tri-Mountain Copper to \$12. Those who had bought many thousands of shares at \$5 and held on were feeling finer than silk, and Al and Burt, though only comparatively small purchasers, were of that number; while those who had not bought at all, for one reason or another, were kicking themselves because they had lost a golden opportunity to pad their bank accounts. Everybody now seemed to believe that Tri-Mountain Copper would go to \$20 at least, and there was a rush on the part of those who had none of the shares to get hold of them at once.

In the scramble which ensued the copper stock jumped to \$15. Al happened to be returning from an errand to the Mills Building when he learned that Tri-Mountain Copper had gone up three points inside of a quarter of an hour.

"I never thought it would go as high as that," he muttered. "I guess I'll sell out before the tide turns. I hear brokers say it will go to 20. Perhaps it will, but I haven't the time to follow the game close enough to warrant me taking such a risk. I'll let the other fellows angle for the last dollar, Burt and me will be satisfied with the \$21,000 in sight now."

Accordingly Al hurried to the office of the broker through whom he had bought the shares and ordered them sold. They went in fifteen minutes at \$16, and Al and his chum were \$21,700 better off than before they heard of Tri-Mountain Copper. While these things were going on at the Curb, the Exchange was going wild over the rise of L. & M. The members of the pool were figuring on a profit of \$25 a share, and not one expected to make less than a quarter of a million. Just as they seemed to be on the point of realizing their expectations something happened. A formidable bear clique, which had been watching its chance to make a coup, sprang a surprise on the L. & M. combine, and succeeded in starting a slump in the stock. Inside of ten minutes this slump became a panic.

Then the panic developed into a complete rout for the L. & M. pool. When the smoke of the battle finally cleared away, half the members of the combine were badly done up financially, but none worse than Parker and Smith. They were unable to meet their share of the enormous losses sustained by the pool, and they were obliged to send notices to that effect to the Chairman of the Exchange, who read them out to the disorganized traders on the floor. The afternoon papers, in their graphic accounts of the panic in the stock market, announced the names of half a dozen or more brokers who had been forced to make assignments, and among the list appeared the names of Parker and Smith. The result of this was that by the first of the month Parker and Smith retired from Wall Street ruined men; their employees out of a job.

CHAPTER XIII.—Setting Up for Themselves.

"Hello, Burt, what are you looking for in the paper?" asked Al on the morning after their respective offices had shut down for good.

The boys were seated in a Sixth Avenue restaurant eating their breakfast.

"I'm looking for another job," replied Burt.

"I wouldn't if I were you."

"Why not? Because we're worth money?"

"Because you and I are going into business down in Wall Street, as soon as we can find an office and hang our shingle out."

"Are we?" grinned Burt. "You're joking, aren't you?"

"I never joke on serious subjects," replied Al. "Have you any objection to going into partnership with me? If you have I'll render an immediate accounting of our present capital, amounting to \$33,300, divide up, and then I'll branch out alone."

"Oh, come off! You know I haven't any objection. Haven't we been practically partners ever since we started in to work the market?"

"We have."

"Well, what's your scheme?"

"My plan is to rent a small office, and devote our energies to trading on our own hook exclusively. I don't expect the general public to rush in on us with orders for us to execute—that is, not until we have been some time in business and have got a standing in the Street. In the course of events, if we stick together, we may be able to build a business up like any other broker."

"Your plan suits me from the ground floor up. I suppose we start in right away?"

"There's no reason why we should lose any time over it. While working for our employers at \$400 per year we have, within eighteen months, made \$33,000, besides the \$6,000 I captured with my own \$1,000. In the next eighteen months, as our own bosses, we ought to do much better, or——"

"Or what?" asked Burt, as his chum paused.

"Go broke."

"Oh, I say, old man, don't give me the shivers."

"Well, you know what happened to Mr. Parker and Mr. Smith, not speaking of others equally as well off and experienced. Speculating in Wall Street is at all times a game of chance, even when you're working on a tip. Tips are fine things to work with, but they've got to be handled gingerly. You can't tell what they will lead to. It is the unexpected that takes the ground from under you when you are figuring on the profits in sight. When you go into a deal you never can tell, until you are out of it, just where you are going to land."

The boys, having finished their breakfast, left the restaurant and walked downtown.

"I suppose Bessie Brown is hustling for another position this morning," said Burt.

"No; Bessie Brown is going to hang her shingle out with us."

"She is?" exclaimed Burt, in surprise.

"Yes. I've persuaded her to start out for herself as a public stenographer and typist. We'll give her desk room free to look after the office when we're both out. Occasionally we may want a letter written, and it will be handy to have her around to do it."

"Where are you going to look for an office?"

"In one of the Wall Street buildings."

"We'll have to pay a pretty steep rent."

"The figure is regulated by the amount of square feet occupied and the situation of the office."

A small office will do us, and it isn't necessary for us to get a room overlooking Wall Street."

After reaching the financial district the boys began looking for a suitable office. They soon found that what they wanted was almost as scarce as hen's teeth. No but there were offices enough, hundreds of them, but they all seemed to have tenants. Finally they found one on the sixth floor of the new Tioga Building. It had just been vacated by the agent of a railroad appliance, something in the block signal line.

"Whom do you represent, and what is the business?" asked the janitor who took them upstairs to show them the small back room.

"I represent the firm of Britton & Hale, traders in stocks. My name is Britton, and this is my partner, Burt Hale," replied Al.

The janitor looked at them pretty hard.

"We don't rent offices to boys," he said.

"Why not?"

"They are not responsible tenants."

"That doesn't apply to us. We are ready to deposit a year's rent in advance, provided we are allowed interest on our money."

"Well, you'll have to see the agent about it. I'll show you the room, and if you want it you can see what you can do with Mr. Galway."

The boys liked the office well enough, and decided to take it if the agent would rent it to them. They went downstairs to see Mr. Galway. He did not seem inclined to consider their application at first, even when Al said they would pay a year in advance. He questioned Al closely about what he proposed to use the office for, and at length he said he might let them have it if they furnished satisfactory reference.

"How will Mr. Seymour Atherton, of the Vanderpool Building, do?" asked Al. "He is a well-known stockbroker."

"Do you offer him as your reference?"

"I must see him about the matter first."

"Well, I'll give you the refusal of the room for an hour. If you bring me a signed letter from guaranteeing you to be proper tenants, and also the rent for one year from the first of the month, I'll let you have the office."

"All right," replied Al.

The boys started at once for the Vanderpool Building. Reaching Mr. Atherton's office, Al asked for that gentleman and was shown into his private room. The broker remembered him and appeared to be glad to see him again. Al explained the object of his visit, and asked him if he cared to do what the agent of the Tioga Building required before he would rent the office to himself and his chum.

He told Mr. Atherton how he and Burt had made \$33,000 in the stock market out of an original investment of \$50, and the broker expressed his astonishment at their remarkable luck. He consented to furnish Al with the letter in question and sent for his stenographer to whom he dictated the same and then signed it. Al thanked him and withdrew. The boys returned at once to the Tioga Building, where Al presented Mr. Atherton's letter to Mr. Galway. They got the office, Al paying down one month's rent in advance.

"We'll now proceed to furnish it," said Al, when they left with the key in his pocket. "One desk will be enough, several chairs, a table for Bessie

Brown, a rug, a safe, a few pictures and a ticker."

On the following day everything was delivered and the room looked quite comfortable and business-like. A painter lettered the glass with the following:

BRITTON & HALE, Stocks and Bonds.
Miss B. Brown, Stenographer.

Bessie Brown, in response to a letter from Al, came down that day and looked at the office.

"Quite cozy, isn't it?" she said. "I must go and rent a typewriter, and then I'll be ready for business."

"I'll attend to the typewriter for you, Bessie," said Al. "When you come down tomorrow you'll find it here, and perhaps by that time Burt and I will have succeeded in scaring up some work for you to start in on. Here are some business cards I got printed for you," and Al handed her a small bunch. "You can do some drumming yourself with them if you wish."

Bessie thanked him and said she would canvass the small offices in the building.

"I have also put a standing advertisement for you in two of the financial dailies, so I hope you will soon have work enough to keep you busy," said Al.

"You are very good to me, Al," replied Bessie gratefully.

"Don't mention it. Maybe you'll find the way to return the favor one of these days."

He pressed her hand and looked into her eyes. She blushed a bit and turned her head away, but she did not take her hand away, and Al was satisfied that he had a chance to win her.

Several days later Al met Broker Wagner, who was looking for an easy mark, so after a little conversation Wagner thought Al was easy and let the boy have a ten day option on 5,000 shares of D. & G. The broker did not bother his head about the matter, but was surprised when the stock advanced to a figure that precluded his buying it. Of course he had to make good when Al came for the stock, so he bought it at such an advanced figure he almost had a fit. But Al secured it all right.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Boy Traders Buy Golden Harpoon Mining Shares.

D. & G. dropped back to 71 that afternoon, closing at that price, and Wagner then kicked himself for having bought at the advanced figure.

"I could have saved \$20,000 at any rate, and it may go down still lower tomorrow from the looks of things," he growled to himself as he sat in his office and looked over the tape.

D. & G., however, did not go any lower next day, but, on the contrary, it recovered and went back to 76. The day after it went up to 81, and Al sold his option for that, he and his chum clearing a profit of \$90,000. That gave them a capital of \$123,000.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Burt. "Ninety thousand dollars is a fortune of itself."

"Yes, it's quite a tidy sum," replied Al carelessly.

"We're worth over \$60,000 apiece."

"Don't let that fact worry you, Burt."

"Worry me! Say, I'm just tickled to death. I feel like whooping things up."

"So do I, in a way; but it isn't dignified. Remember that we're the boy traders of Wall Street and not a couple of kids. Just imitate the old-time Red Man—that is, say nothing and saw wood."

"It's pretty hard to say nothing when a fellow feels like painting the town red. I don't see how you manage to take it so cool."

"We'll celebrate our coup with a dinner at Blank's, and a private box at some show afterward."

"All right. That's something. Suppose we quit for the day and let Miss Brown close up the shop when she gets through?"

"You can quit, if you want to, I can't, for I've some business to attend to."

Burt, however, didn't want to go off alone, so he went down on Broad Street to watch the Curb brokers, and see what he could pick up in the way of information. Al went out, too, to look after the business he had in hand. While they were out Morris Wagner came in.

"Neither of the boys are in, I see," he said to Bessie.

"No, sir."

"I'll be back in about half an hour," said Wagner, turning around and going out.

Al returned in twenty minutes and Bessie told him that Broker Wagner had been in looking for him. Hardly had he sat down at his desk when an A. D. T. boy came in with a message. It ran as follows:

"Al: I've just learned on good authority that there will be something doing in that Golden Harpoon mining stock that Wagner tried to work off on you a while ago. It's going at 65 cents, but I've good reason to believe that it will be up to one dollar or over again. Drop in on Wagner and see if he's got those shares yet. If he has try and buy them at the market, or even at 75 cents. It will be coin in our pockets. I've just bought 10,000 at 65, and they will be delivered at the office C. O. D. inside of an hour. If I can find any more I'm going to take them in."

"Yours, Burt."

Al read the note over twice.

"If what Burt says about a rise in Golden Harpoon turns out true it would be a good one on Wagner to get those shares from him at 65 before he learns that the stock is likely to advance in price. He tried to stick those shares on us at \$1 just before the decline set in, but it didn't work. Now I'd like to give him another attack of heart failure by getting the better of him on the same stock."

At that moment the door opened and Wagner walked in. He hadn't forgiven Al for being the indirect cause of his loss in the D. & G. option deal, and he had cudged his brains for a chance to get square with him. He had a lot of mining shares in his safe which he had from time to time bought in expectation that they would go up in price, but had been disappointed. He was anxious to get rid of them now, for he was short of cash. Among them were the Golden Harpoon certificates which he had failed to push off on Al. He had 75 cents a share for the stock, and one time he could have sold them for \$1.40, when they were booming, but held on because advices from Paradise, Nevada, where the mine was located,

intimated that the stock would go to \$2. It didn't, however, but, on the contrary, fell back to \$1.25, but with no demand at that figure. That was the time he tried to unload them on Al for \$1. A week later the price dropped to 65 cents, and reports from the mine were not encouraging.

"Take a seat, Mr. Wagner," said Al cheerfully, when the broker walked in. "What can I do for you?"

"I want you to do me a favor, Britton," said Wagner. "I'm pushed for money. I must make a raise somewhere. As you made a good thing out of me in D. & G., I think you might do something for me in return."

"I have no objection to doing you a favor if I can, Mr. Wagner," replied the boy.

"I want \$15,000. I'll put up those 20,000 shares of Golden Harpoon, worth 65 cents; 5,000 shares of New Discovery, worth 26 cents; 10,000 What Cheer, worth 30 cents; and 4,000 Atlas, worth 80 cents, in all \$20,500 worth of stock as security." Al considered a moment.

"I don't care to make any loan on mining stocks, Mr. Wagner, but I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take the stock off your hands for \$15,000 cash."

"Make it \$17,000 and I'll go you."

"No," replied Al. "I'll split the difference and make it \$16,000."

Wagner wanted the money so bad that he agreed, and the deal was made. When Burt got back Al had all the certificates in the safe.

"I picked up 5,000 more shares of Golden Harpoon, but that is all I could find."

"How did you get the pointer on Golden Harpoon?" asked Al.

His chum explained how he had overheard a big mining broker tell a friend that a new and rich lead had been found in the mine and that when the news was sent out the stock would go above the dollar mark, probably to \$1.50.

"We've got 35,000 shares and we'll make a good thing out of it," said Burt.

"We certainly will if it goes to \$1.50," replied Al.

"What did you buy that other mining stock from Wagner for?"

"Well, he wanted to raise \$15,000, so I made him a low offer on the whole batch he offered as security, rather than loan him the money. Figuring that Golden Harpoon on your report was easily worth its market price, I got the other \$7,500 worth of stock for \$3,500, or a little less than half its market value. We should be able to get our money back and something over any time."

CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

Next day Golden Harpoon was quoted on the Goldfield Consolidated Mining Exchange at 55. When Al received the daily report he scratched his chin and showed it to Burt.

"Golden Harpoon seems to have gone backward instead of forward," he said.

Burt hung around the Curb Market that day, but there were no developments in Golden Harpoon. He saw a broker bidding for it at 55, but whether he got any at that price the boy did not find out. Al went to the visitors' gallery of the

Stock Exchange and put in his time there. When he left he ran gainst Wagner on the street.

"I see I'm out \$2,000 on that Golden Harpoon I bought from you," he said to the broker.

Magner grinned in a satisfied way.

"If you hold on to it long enough you'll get the your money back," he said. "You haven't any reason to kick, for you got the whole batch at bargain rates."

"That's all right; but recollect we couldn't sell the other shares at the market at present."

"Why not?"

"You wouldn't have sold them at bargain rates if you could have got the market for them."

"Oh, I didn't have the time to monkey with them. If you want to get your money for them send them out to Goldfield. You can afford to take the time, while I could not."

"We intend to hold them. Maybe they'll go up some time."

Next day Golden Harpoon was down to 50 cents. That fact, however, didn't worry the boy traders any. When Al got back to the office after lunch Bessie told him that a man had called to see him, and would be back later on.

"Did he leave his name?"

"No. He merely asked what time you'd be back, and then said he'd call again."

Bessie put on her hat and went out to her own lunch. While she was away the man came in.

"Are you Mr. Britton?" he asked Al.

"That's my name."

"Mr. Magner, on the floor below, told me that you bought some Golden Harpoon stock from him the other day."

"That's right," nodded Al.

"Do you want to sell it?"

"Not particularly."

"I'll give 60 cents for what you have."

"I don't care to sell it at that price."

"What do you want for it?"

"I want \$1.50."

"A dollar and a half! You're joking, aren't you?"

"No. I think it may go to that some day, or even higher. As long as we can afford to hold on to it we won't let it go at less than that."

"It is only selling at 50 cents today."

"I know that."

"It's been dropping right along and may go to 40 tomorrow."

"Then why are you anxious to give 60?"

The visitor looked a bit confused.

"I have my reasons," he said.

"And I have mine for wishing to hold on to it."

"Then you won't take even 75, eh?"

"I'll take \$1.50. That's my lowest."

"Do you really expect to get it?"

"Possibly, some day."

"Mining shares are uncertain things."

"So are all stocks."

"I'll give you 80 cents."

"No," answered Al.

"That's the best I can do," said the caller, rising with a look of disappointment on his face.

"Then I'm afraid we can't do business," replied Al.

The man bowed and took his leave. A few days

afterward the news about the discovery of a rich vein of gold ore in the Golden Harpoon came out in the newspapers. The publication, which dispatches from Goldfield and Paradise verified, created something of a sensation on the Curb. Naturally there was a big demand for the stock, as high as \$1 being offered for it, but there were no sales. Al and Burt believed it would go to \$1.50, and held on to their shares. Other holders apparently had an idea it was worth more than \$1, and wouldn't let it out. As a consequence bids were made up to \$1.25. Reports from Goldfield showed that it was selling for \$1.40, with an upward tendency. Before the close of the Curb market, Burt sold 5,000 shares at \$1.50, the firm making a profit on it of \$4,250.

Next day he sold 5,000 more shares at \$1.65, on which the profit was an even \$5,000. The price continued to rise, and Burt got \$1.90 for another 5,000, their profit being \$5,750. On the following morning \$2 was offered and refused for the stock. In the course of two weeks the flattering reports from the mine sent the price up to \$3, at which figure the boys let the 20,000 shares they had got from Magner go, realizing a profit of \$47,000 on it. Their total profits on Golden Harpoon amounted to \$62,000, which was beyond their greatest anticipations. The maddest man on the Street was Morris Magner.

He realized that he had let a good thing slip through his fingers when he sold Golden Harpoon stock to the boy traders. When the boys figured up their capital they found they were worth \$185,000 in cash. Learning that there was a suite of two offices on the floor below that had just been vacated, they arranged with the agent of the building to take them. That gave them a private room to themselves, while Bessie had the outside office to herself. They were now well acquainted with the general run of brokers, who had ceased to make game of their efforts to establish themselves.

Al put a standing advertisement in the Wall Street dailies, and in one of the evening papers that catered to people interested in stock matters, and the young firm soon began to pick up a mail order trade. By degrees they got some city customers, and they hired a bookkeeper and an office boy. By that time they had been three years in Wall Street, and Al celebrated his twentieth birthday. The boy traders are now thoroughly established and doing a good and growing business, Al having acquired a seat on the Stock Exchange.

Their capital is estimated at over half a million. Al is married to Bessie Brown, and they occupy a handsome little home in the Bronx. Burt, who is still unmarried, lives with them, and Al's little son calls him "Uncle" Burt. Al and his chum still play their old instruments together as they used to do when they first came to New York, the only difference being that now they play for fun while then they were Playing for Money.

Next week's issue will contain "THE BOY COPPER MINER; OR, TED BROWN'S RISE TO RICHES."

TRUE GRIT

or

An Engineer at Eighteen

By Gaston Garne

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

Leaning out of the cab window was Jerry Lang, who hadn't spoken a word since he told Conductor Jones how he had run Bob down.

"Look here, Lang," said Jones, pausing beside the throbbing locomotive, "there isn't a sign anywhere along the viaduct that you ran any one down there."

Jerry stared at him.

"I wish it was so, Mr. Jones," he said, with a mournful shake of his head, "but I swear to you that I saw the boy go down under the pilot. Ask Healey, and he'll tell you the same story. We both saw him disappear under the engine."

"Then he must have gone down into the river," said Jones.

Jerry hadn't thought of such a thing, and he brightened up at once.

"There's a chance, then that he's alive, after all," he said, excitedly. "Something ought to be done at once to save the boy."

"I'll see to that," said Jones, moving off toward Jacob Lickett, the superintendent, who was now leading the crowd across the ties of the trestle bridge toward the spot where the displaced rails told their silent but awful story.

"This is diabolical!" exclaimed the superintendent, as they came to a halt on Lone Tree Point.

"Infamous!" said Judge Kent and Passenger Agent Austin in a breath, as they gazed at the trap.

"Where's the young fellow that signalled the train?" shouted several excited voices.

"That's it," said Lickett, looking around, "where's Blake?"

"Gone through the girder bridge into the river," said Conductor Jones, coming up.

"What!" exclaimed Lickett, Judge Kent and Austin together.

"Jerry Lang said he ran him down on the viaduct. Had he been torn up under the wheels there would have been plenty of evidence about the spot of that fact. But there isn't a sign of it, so he must have slipped or purposely plunged between the girders. I'm afraid he's lost, poor fellow."

"Here, you men, get down into the valley, cut around the ravine and search the river bank on this side for the boy, do you hear?" cried the superintendent. "And you," to one of the track-walkers, "run down and rouse up the section boss, and tell him to bring a couple of his hands up here to repair the track. Be lively about it."

Lanterns were got from the quarry shanty, and the party set out.

"Hold on, Master Hardy," said Lickett to the youth whose face showed how distressed he was about his missing chum, "you will come with us."

The superintendent ordered the conductor to back the train to the other end of the viaduct and then, in company with Judge Kent, Agent Austin,

and Bruce Hardy, got on the tender of the locomotive.

The engine came to a stop where a pair of granite steps led down beside the masonry to the river.

The superintendent headed his party on the hunt for Bob.

Presently many lanterns were twinkling along both banks of the Savage River.

The moon, which till that moment had been hidden behind a bank of cloud, now sailed into a clear space of sky, and shone down as though determined to assist the searchers.

The waters of the river shone like polished ebony in a hundred spots by metallic treak of foam.

Here and there projecting rock formed swirling eddies of froth close in to the bank.

Searching the bank seemed, after all like a forlorn hope, for, as Bob had dropped from the center of the viaduct, it was more than probable the stream had carried him with great speed down the valley.

Where he would eventually fetch up was in that case purely guesswork.

Three hundred yards below the girder bridge the river made a slight bend, and at this spot a big tree, recently been undermined by the water, had toppled over into the river, but still anchored by powerful roots, its lower branches just swept the surface.

Bruce struck this spot first and swung his lantern aloft.

As he peered into the waters he gave a cry that brought all the others running to the place.

Bob Blake, caught, under the collar of his jacket by a stout branch, was hanging there, insensible, his head quite clear of the water.

CHAPTER XI.

How Death Came to No. Thirty-three.

Hardy crawled out on the big trunk and, grasping his chum under the arms, drew him out of the water.

To get him on the bank was but the work of a moment or two.

Under the vigorous treatment suggested by the superintendent Bob soon recovered his senses, and presently declared that he felt all right.

"Glad to hear it, Bob," said Jacob Lickett; "you had a close call for your life this time and no mistake."

"I guess I did," admitted the boy, "but as long as I saved the express, Mr. Lickett, I'm satisfied."

"My dear lad," said Judge Kent, grasping him by the hand and shaking it fervently, "you've done a heroic act this night. You must have saved a hundred lives."

"All of that," said General Passenger Agent Austin, "for the Pullmans are full. Such pluck as you have shown deserve the highest recognition."

"And he shall get it," said the judge, decidedly. "Bob, my daughter Myrtle is on board that train. I feel I am under the deepest obligation to you."

As Bob was shivering in the cold night air no more time was wasted in words.

The searchers on the other side of the river

were signaled and all hands returned to the cars.

Bob was told to get into the special car, remove his wet clothes and turn into a berth, which he was glad to do, in company with Bruce, who felt wearied enough after their night's adventures, to go to rest in an adjoining one.

The track was repaired by this time, and the express proceeded on its journey, arriving at Rushville close onto two o'clock, too late by nearly an hour for the eastbound passengers to make connection with the Atlantic express.

A large part of the travelers had slept through the thrilling event which held up the train, and were surprised to find their sleepers side-tracked at the Rushville junction in the morning.

When they learned the cause of their detention their feelings may be better imagined than described.

A resolution commending Bob Blake's courage and expressive of their gratitude was drawn up and signed by every eastbound passenger. Nearly \$1,000 was collected, and with the paper was sent to the young fireman, who some time before had gone home to reassure his anxious mother and sister, who had not slept a wink all through the night because of his unexplained absence from home.

Bob Blake's name was printed in every important newspaper in the country that day, and thousands of people from Maine and California and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf were impressed by his act of heroism.

About noon Miss Myrtle Kent called at the Blake cottage.

She was a very pretty young lady of sixteen years and, notwithstanding the difference in their social standing, was a warm friend of Bessie Blake.

She brought, as was her custom of late, a dainty basket of delicacies to the sick girl.

The two girls had a long chat in the sitting-room, and there wasn't anything too nice for Myrtle to say about Bessie's brother.

"Papa says Bob is the bravest boy in Rushville, and I fully agree with him," she continued, enthusiastically. "And just to think, Bessie, that I slept through it all."

"And Bob is the best brother in the world, too," said Bessie, earnestly.

"Hello, Bess, aren't you plastering it on pretty thick," said Bob, coming into the room at this moment. "Miss Myrtle knows better than to believe more than half you say about me."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Myrtle, with a little silvery laugh. "You know, Bob Blake, that your sister never fibs."

"If I only believed one-half of the fine compliments you two have been wasting your breath over the last half hour, I would never get tired of patting myself on the back."

"What, you horrid boy!" said Myrtle, with a look that was meant to be severe, but which was a bad failure in that direction. "Do you mean to say that you were listening?"

"I was in the dining-room reading one of my books on engineering, and the door between us was open, you know. If you girls will talk out loud, and get personal, of course you can't expect a fellow to be deaf."

"Listeners usually don't hear anything good of themselves," said Myrtle, archly.

"This case is an exception, then," grinned Bob.

"Well I don't care" said Miss Kent, giving her pretty shoulders a little shrug. "I didn't say anything more than everybody is saying in town to-day about you."

"I'm not responsible for what people say," said Bob, good-humoredly.

"Yes, you are. If you hadn't saved the night express—— But there, now I forgot to thank you for saving my life as well as dear papa's."

She got up and, walking up to Bob, took both, his brown hands in her soft white ones, while tears of deep gratitude sprang into her beautiful hazel eyes.

"I am very, very grateful to you, and so is papa and mamma."

"And I, Miss Myrtle, feel amply repaid in knowing that I have been of service to you and Judge Kent."

"It is very nice of you to say so," said Myrtle, smiling through the glistening teardrops. "Papa will see that the company gives you full recognition for the heroic action you performed last night."

"I hope your father won't go to any trouble on my account. I am sure I only did my duty. No fellow with a spark of courage could stand idle when more than a hundred lives were in deadly peril. Bruce Hardy, or a dozen other boys I might mention, I am sure would have done the same thing under the same circumstances."

But Myrtle Kent shook her curls in evident disbelief that any other man or boy in Rushville would have taken the desperate chances Bob did.

Much more was said on this and other topics before Myrtle took her leave, and her last glance and the gentle pressure of her hand sent Bob into the seventh heaven of delight.

When Bob appeared at the round-house that afternoon to go out with Thirty-three and a long line of loaded freight cars, already made up for the trip westward to Vinol, he was greeted with enthusiasm by every railroad employee in the yard.

"Three cheers for Bob Blake!" shouted one enthusiastic wiper, flinging his hat into the air, and they were given with a hearty good-will.

"You're a nervy lad," said Norton, the foreman, shaking him warmly by the hand.

"We want the story Bob, when you come back," said a gray-haired engineer.

"All right," said Bob, pushing his way toward Thirty-three, to which one of the wipers was putting the finishing touches.

The young fireman got up into the cab, where he was presently joined by old Beckley, one of the most reliable engineers of the road.

"Hello, Bob!" he said. "I see you've been making a great reputation for yourself since we parted yesterday afternoon."

"Come, now, Mr. Beckley, don't you start in to fill me up with compliments. I'm getting tired of having everybody take his hat off to me."

"You're too modest altogether," said the engineer, as ran the locomotive out on the siding, where one of the men turned her to her track. Then he ran her down the yard, where she was coupled to the waiting box car.

Beckley now received his final instructions from the yard master, and the freight pulled out of the yard on its trip westward over the mountains.

"You've done a big thing, Bob," said Beckley,

coming back to the subject again as soon as they were clear of the town.

"I can't deny that," said the boy fireman, "but I'm sure any decent fellow would have acted exactly as I did."

"I don't know about that," answered Beckley. "Give her a dash of coal, will you, and then tell me the whole story. Nothing like getting it at first hand."

Bob flung open the furnace door, glanced at the glowing mass within, then grabbed the shovel and distributed several shovelfuls of fuel evenly over the blazing heap.

Clanging the door to, he rang the bell for a crossing, and then, with a long stretch of clear track ahead, he told the thrilling narrative of his previous night's adventures.

"Did you actually crawl around the promontory below the railroad cut?" said the engineer in great amazement.

"Yes sir."

"Great Cæsar! That beats anything for cool nerve I ever heard of."

"It had to be done, Mr. Beckley. The cut was blocked by that scoundrel, Patterson, and I felt that he was more than a match for me."

"Then that leap into the river through the viaduct under the very wheels of the express!" continued Beckley, regarding his fireman with the greatest admiration. "You should have heard Jerry Lang tell about it. He said you must have done it like a flash, for the pilot of his engine seemed to go right over you."

"Well, I didn't have any too much time, that's a fact."

"It was no fool of a drop, that wasn't," said Beckley, wagging his head sagely. "And yet here you are attending to business just as if nothing had occurred to you. Bob, you're a wonder!"

Twilight was merging into the gloom of night when Thirty-three, pulling its long line of cars, came lumbering out of Dismal Gorge, and the magnificent panorama of Long View Valley, with its boiling river, burst into view.

Lone Tree Point, the trestle bridge, the cut through the promontory and the iron girder bridge had a new and terrible interest for Bob now, and he may be pardoned if he felt a quivering of the nerves as he surveyed the dangers through which he had passed.

"What's the matter, Mr. Beckley?" asked Bob, noticing a peculiar ashiness in the face of the engineer as they passed Round Top crossing a few minutes later.

"Nothing to worry about," was the offhand response. "My heart troubles me a bit at times, that's all."

"You look kind of bad. Guess you need a rest. Why don't you lay off for a spell?"

"Can't afford it, my boy. My wife isn't any too strong, and I've got a couple of kiddies. They've got to be fed, and one can't save much out of the wages paid there days by the bloated corporations."

At Avalanche the freight ran on the siding to wait for a passenger train to pass, and during the interval of some thirty minutes the crew had their supper at the station eating-house.

At the proper time the freight pulled out and continued its way, now all downgrade, to Vinol.

Old Beckley had been unusually cheerful since leaving Avalanche and he was telling Bob how

he had just bought a little cottage for his family on the outskirts of Rushville when he pulled up at a tank to take water.

Bob got up on the tender, yanked the spot over and saw that the proper supply was taken into the well. Then he swung the spot back and took his place in the cab.

"All right, Mr. Beckley," he said, glancing back along the train.

The locomotive didn't make a move, and after a second or two Bob looked around to see what the engineer was about.

He was hanging out of the cab window in the usual attitude assumed when looking ahead.

"What's up?" thought Bob, leaning out of his window and glancing down the line.

The track was clear, as far as he could see, and the switch light, a hundred feet in advance, was burning a clear, white light.

"I can't see anything," muttered the boy. "I wonder what the old man is looking at?"

At any rate, it wasn't his place to interfere with Beckley. The engineer knew his business and was responsible for holding the train.

"Perhaps he didn't hear me?" thought Bob, after a couple of minutes had passed.

So he sung out "All right" once more in a louder tone, but old Beckley made not the slightest move.

It began to dawn on the young fireman that something was wrong with the man.

Then, with a strong feeling of impending trouble, Bob got close up and looked in his face.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, "the man is dead!"

Bob was staggered by the awful discovery. A few moments before Beckley had been talking to him in his usual manner. Now the old man's lips were forever closed. It was awful.

Then Bob recovered his nerve, and his first act was to blow the whistle, and the signal soon brought the conductor from the caboose over the tops of the cars.

Conductor Brown was taken all aback when he dropped into the cab, and Bob pointed to the dead engineer.

"How did it occur?" he inquired.

"He went off as quiet as a babe," said Bob, "while I was filling the well."

"Heart disease, I guess," suggested the conductor.

"Well, he had an attack of something while we were passing Round Top crossing, and when I spoke to him about it he said that his heart troubled him sometimes."

"That's what it was. Poor old chap! He was an old reliable, and I'm sorry to lose him."

"I feel sorry for his wife and poor little children," said Bob, in a sad voice. "It's only a few minutes ago he was talking about them. Said he had bought a house for them, and was just getting on his feet, after a spell of hard luck. It's tough."

The dead engineer was removed to the caboose.

"This is a fine pickle we're in," said the conductor. "Do you think you can take the train through to Paradise, Bob?"

"Yes, or to Vinol, for that matter."

"You feel competent to do it, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

(To be continued)

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, MARCH 19, 1926

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

DOLLAR BILL RELIC SEIZED

The Government today is in possession of a 18-by-22-inch reproduction of a one-dollar bill of the Civil War period, seized from Charles W. Steckley of Harrisburg, Pa. Steckley recently refused an offer of \$3,000 for it. Secret Service agents heard of it when Steckley offered it for exhibition at the Philadelphia sesquicentennial. The Government has confiscated it under the law forbidding possession of reproduction of currency.

Steckley's father once risked his life to save the reproduction from a burning building in Harrisburg, Steckley said. It was seized by Bart Bratton, Secret Service agent of the Baltimore district. It has been in the Steckley family since the Civil War, and the owner said he was preparing to insure it for \$10,000.

STAMP COLLECTORS PROFIT FROM GOVERNMENT'S ERRORS

Errors in printing postage stamps often cost governments thousands of dollars, but they sometimes put small fortunes into the hands of the stamp collectors who value the misprinted tokens for their rarity, says "Popular Mechanics."

A few months ago, Great Britain issued a sheet of stamps which was so placed during the printing process that the glue was spread on the wrong side. An American dealer obtained possession of a few of the stamps, the others were destroyed. The few that were saved now are commanding a high price. Another mistake that benefited the collectors occurred in connection with the changes in postal rates in this country.

QUEER WAYS OF MAKING A LIVING

Men find many queer ways to make a living. One of the queerest ways is that of giving blood to the physicians for a transfusion into some patient. This is a profession which is followed all around the country and requires peculiar fitness. Blood must be microscopically examined and found to be fit in every way for mingling with that of the patient.

This is brought to notice by the death of Frank W. Schroeder, 50 years old, of Chicago, who was a professional blood seller, at which he made a living until he gave too much blood and died from its ill effects. The regular price seems to be \$25 for a point of blood, and physicians say that a healthy person can restore this blood in 48 hours. Anyway, the hospitals have a corps of these men and women to whom they apply in need and who seem to make a fair living.

Another queer way is that of making drives for some religious, charitable, or less worthy object. For example, the City Club of Washington wants to get in 1,000 members before a certain date. It makes terms of 20 per cent. with a circle of professional drivers, who come to the city, divide it up into small parts, and make an intensive drive for several days for 1,000 members, which would give the club \$100,000. Of this the drivers will get 20 per cent. or \$20,000. It seems to pay, and these professional drivers are in constant request for churches, socials and clubs.

LAUGHS

Young Larry—Ah! Maggie, I love yez as much as our goat loves circus posters." Maggie—And I'll stick to ye, Larry, like the posters stick to the fence, an' better."

(In Chicago.) He—May I have the pleasure of your company at supper, Miss Breezy? She—You're a little late, Mr. Waldo; I've been down to supper three times already.

"Yes, papa, Jack is poor, but he loves me. Mayn't I marry him, papa?" "Well, yes if you want to." "You dear old thing—but when?" "Immediately." "Oh, but you know it's Lent." "Yes, but wouldn't it be well to get broken into fasting right away?"

"My husband is the laziest man on earth," declared Mrs. Harlem. "Dear me! I wonder if he is lazier than mine," replied Mrs. Bronx. "Indeed he is. Why, he even ordered soft coal for the furnace, because he thought it would be easier to shovel than hard coal!"

First Hotel Runner—This way for the Grand Hotel, sir. Only hotel in town with electric lights, steam heat in every room, passenger elevator, baths, billiard parlors, all modern improvements. Three dollars a day. Free 'bus right here, sir. Second Hotel Runner—Acme hotel, sir. Four dollars a day; fifty cents to ride up. Proprietor pays the help out of his own pocket. (Passenger fairly tumbles into second 'bus.)

Not long since a New Hampshire committeeman was examining an infant school class. "Can any little girl or boy give the definition of the word 'average?'" he asked. For some time no one replied, but finally a little girl hesitatingly replied: "It is a thing a hen lays an egg on, sir." "No, that's not right." "Yes, sir, my book says so," and she trotted up to her questioner, and pointed to this sentence in her reading book: "A hen lays an egg every day on an average."

GOOD READING

POWERFUL NEW GAS

Manufactured gas that is said to give twice the heat and light value of any gas now used was announced recently by Col. E. E. Garrison, President of a New York gas company. It is made by vaporizing the heaviest oils obtainable, including sludge and tar, in a column of superheated steam. It can be produced, it is claimed, at much lower cost than any gas manufactured today.

ELEVATORS AT NIAGARA

To replace the Beddell stairway leading to the "Rock of Ages" and the "Cave of the Winds" at Niagara Falls, a 200-foot tunnel connecting with a shaft 167 feet deep has been constructed, says Popular Mechanics.

The shaft was dug straight down from the surface of Goat Island and contains two electric elevators, surrounded by a spiral stairway.

The mouth of the tunnel opens directly upon the whirlpool, and a peninsula built of rock removed from the excavations affords a close inspection of the falls. It has been named "Clear-water View." A structure on top of the shaft provides quarters for sightseers as well as space for the elevator apparatus. The new passages did not cost the State a penny, as all funds were taken from fees paid by tourists.

GAS BOMB FOR COLDS

Two San Francisco chemists have just perfected a chlorine gas bomb which makes possible the use of chlorine gas for the treatment of colds in the home, where, the same results are obtained as with more elaborate apparatus, in fact, eliminates the necessity of going to some central source for treatment, with possible exposure to bad weather and further lowering of body resistance. The chlorine gas bomb is made of glass and contains nothing but pure filtered chlorine gas.

To use it, the patient takes the bomb in a closed room and breaks off the ends of the bomb, thus permitting the gas to escape and mingle with the air in the room. The patient remains in this gas filled room for one hour.

MEASURING WAVES

"Waves are higher than the ship, towering like mountains"—you have read about them and heard ocean travelers describe them. Perhaps you actually have seen them. But be careful what you say about them, for now scientists will check up on your statements, says Popular Science Monthly. The length and height of ocean waves have at last been measured exactly by means of a specially constructed camera, according to a German magazine.

Ordinary waves are from six to twelve feet high. In a high sea they may rise to twenty-seven feet, or in a violent gale may reach thirty-six feet. This is the ultimate height of a wave. The length of the largest wave, that is from crest to crest, is said to be 900 feet. It is estimated that it takes twenty seconds for one wave to replace another—the speed of an express train.

TREES REGULATE THE TEMPERATURE

In a discussion of the effect of trees on temperature, Wesley Bailey Leach, City Forester of New York, points out that if our streets and parks were well supplied with vigorous trees we should have much cooler summers and warmer winters.

He gives as his chief reason for this theory the fact that the temperature of a tree never varies, in summer or in winter, from 54 degrees Fahrenheit. "If we cross one of the avenues on a hot day," states Mr. Leach, "when the temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and pass under the shade of a tree, we are refreshed by the cool air that meets us. What makes the change? Not the shade alone, but chiefly the fact that we are in the presence of a body that has a fixed temperature of 54 degrees Fahrenheit, or 46 degrees cooler than the street temperature."

Likewise, on a cold winter day, in passing from the zero temperature of the street into a group of trees, the warmth experienced is due not only to the shelter afforded by the trees but to the warmth of the trees themselves.

MACREADY FLIES IN AIR 79 BELOW ZERO

Failure of the super-charger on his special XCO-5 airplane to give the required atmospheric pressure to his motor after he had climbed to 35,900 feet forced Lieut. John A. Macready, altitude ace of McCook Field, to descend, and prevented him from recapturing the record from France, when he launched his attempt after four postponements during the last four days. He increased his own American record of 35,239 feet. The world record, set by Callizo, is 35,956.47 feet.

The super-charger lacked the proper capacity for the plane, Lieut. Macready stated. He said that at 2,000 feet he saw that the super-charger would be unable to complete the task, but kept climbing with the machine to determine the ceiling that could be reached under the circumstances.

Following the unsuccessful attempt, Lieut. Macready announced he would again attempt to recapture the lost record within the next few weeks if the supercharger is completed within that time. A definite date for the trial, however, has not yet been fixed.

One of the interesting features of the flight was the temperature of 62 degrees below zero centigrade (approximately 79 degrees below zero Fahrenheit), at an altitude of 34,600 feet.

"While at the ceiling for the ship I could see Cincinnati, fifty-seven miles away; Columbus, seventy miles, and Indianapolis, about 110 miles west of Dayton. The visibility, in fact, was unusually good. I was very comfortable throughout the flight. It became slightly chilly when I reached the highest altitude, but at no time was I uncomfortable.

"My watch stopped at 30,000 feet, and I believe it was frozen, because just before landing it started again," he said.

Orville Wright, one of the inventors of the airplane; George B. Smith and Luzern Custer, all of this city, were official observers for the flight.

QUEER HAPPENINGS TO A DETECTIVE

One day, as I returned to police headquarters, after having put in several hours on a till-tapping case, I found a queer-looking old man awaiting me.

He was, I should say, at least fifty-five years old.

He wore a reddish wig, shaved clean, was very precise about his clothing, and was eccentric in speech and action.

As he met me he said:

"Confound it, sir, but you should have more manners than to keep me cooling my heels around a place like this."

"But I didn't know you were here."

"It was your business to know. Blame it, I am put out with you, sir."

"Well, I am here, and now what can I do for you?"

"Resign your place here at once."

"What?"

"Can't you understand the English language? Resign, sir."

"For what reason?"

"That you may engage with me."

He handed me his card, and I saw his name was Ronald Terry.

After a bit he informed me that he was an old bachelor with plenty of cash, and that he had a scheme on hand which he wished to work out.

He offered to engage me for two years at four times the salary I was then receiving, but would not tell me what the work was.

After two or three interviews with him, and after ascertaining from trustworthy men that he was what he represented himself, I closed with his offer.

The day I entered upon his service he said to me:

"You have been in most of the large cities of the United States. Did you ever happen to notice a situation like this: A street about fifty feet wide running off a business street at an angle, but only two blocks long before it ended at a bluff? This short street is built up with brick houses. On the first corner on the right is a drug store. The intersecting street is hardly wider than an alley, and is not paved. To make it more clear to you I will draw a diagram for your especial benefit."

"I do not recollect any location like it, and think we shall have to go from town to town until we find it."

"Exactly, and we start tomorrow. Be at my hotel at eight o'clock in the morning. I shall lay out our route, and whenever we arrive in a city you will do the searching. That's what I have hired you for."

From the foregoing you will be prepared to believe that I thought him "light in the head," as the expression goes, if not worse.

However, as he had the money and was his own master and as he was paying me a big salary, it was not my business to find fault.

I soon discovered that he had his own peculiar ideas in the most trifling matters.

For instance, I was not to know him when we met on the train.

I must, if possible, take the front end of the car, while he took the rear.

At the hotel I must, if such an arrangement were possible, sleep on the floor above him.

At our first stopping place he planned to stay just so many days.

I was to cover only so much of the city per day.

A queer duck you will think him, but I couldn't record the tenth of his strange doings and sayings.

We went directly to Portland, Me., to begin our search, and although I could have covered the city in two days he planned that we should stay sixteen.

Therefore, after the first two days I had nothing to do but lay around.

On the seventh day he sent his card to my room with a request that I call upon him on a matter of business, and when I entered he asked:

"Well, what progress in your search?"

"I can find no such street here, sir."

"Very well. I give you nine more days, in which to make sure."

I spent the nine days in fishing and sailing, and we went from Portland to Augusta.

We put in six days there, and then went to Montpelier, Vermont.

We took each State in rotation, visiting every city above 10,000 population in each State, and by the time we were through with the State of New York the first year was up.

Every day found Mr. Terry the same queer, quaint specimen of humanity.

The same formality was observed, and once, in a railroad smash-up, when I ventured to address him, to inquire if he had been hurt, he looked at me with a cold stare and replied:

"Confound it, sir, you must have mistaken me for someone else!"

We were well along in the second year, and were in Wilmington, Del., when I met an old friend from the West and told him what a wild-goose chase I was on.

He looked at the diagram for a few minutes, and then said:

"You'll strike this in Cincinnati. I could guide you to the exact spot."

He went fishing into his baggage and found an old map of Cincinnati, and in five minutes he had located the identical spot.

I sent my card up to Mr. Terry, and followed it to inform him of my discovery, but he sat down on me immediately with:

"Confound it, man, if you are tired of my ways and wages you can quit! I told you at the outset that I should run this thing myself."

And to prove that he meant to, he planned a route which did not permit us to reach Cincinnati for nearly four months.

He gave me to understand, on arriving there, that we should remain there thirty-one days, and, although I could have found the street in an hour, I knew Mr. Terry too well to object to his plans.

On the second day I went over the street.

It was tenanted by a poor but respectable class of people.

Naturally enough, I had always had a great curiosity to know why my queer employer wanted to find this street, and so, day in and day out, I pursued my investigations.

I asked every resident for information of Terry, but no one had ever heard of him.

The last house on the left-hand side was chock up against the bluff.

One standing on the high hill, of which Cincinnati has so many, could have dropped a stone down upon the roof of this house, which was old and untenanted.

I inspected it outside and in, and saw from its condition that it had been unoccupied for years.

It was a frame, and the floors were about gone, the plastering all off, and the doors and much of the partitions had been carried away for fuel.

It struck me that this old house held the key to the mystery, but though I searched high and low, I could find nothing.

On the morning of the thirty-first day Mr. Terry sent for me and inquired if I had found the street.

This was the only time he had spoken to me since our arrival.

I replied that I had, and then he said:

"You will go to your room, lock yourself in, and remain until I send for you."

I did nothing of the kind.

I skipped out, reached the street, posted myself in the hallway of a tenement, and an hour later saw Mr. Terry appear.

He went straight to the old house, was inside for half an hour, and then came out with a package in his hand.

I took it to be a package of papers wrapped up in oilskin.

He walked off without a glance to the right or left, and I took a shortcut and reached the hotel first.

After dinner he sent for me and said:

"Our search is ended. You have been faithful and sensible. Here is the balance of your salary for the second year, and here is \$1,000 extra. Good-by, sir."

"But won't you enlighten—"

"Confound it, sir, good-by," he interrupted, and I picked up my money and went, and to this day have never got at the bottom facts.

Two or three years later, after I had worked up a case in a town in Ohio, a woman called at the hotel and asked to see me.

I found her to be a spinster about fifty years old, wearing the traditional ringlets and eye-glasses, and as stiff as a crowbar in her demeanor.

She, too, had an original way of arriving at the point.

After introducing herself she said:

"I am rich. Some folks call me eccentric, but I am simply sensible. I wish to travel, and I wish to hire you as an escort. You will be my employee and I shall exact the most formal respect of you. I may need you for a year, or may not, but I will hire you for that length of time."

After a little talk we arrived at figures satisfactory to both of us.

She gave herself a week to get ready in.

At the end of that time I reported for duty, and found her all ready to start.

She had two fair-sized trunks for baggage, and she directed me to buy tickets to New York.

She didn't say how much money she had, how long she was going to stay, or give any other particulars.

I obeyed directions, and in due time we arrived in Gotham and put up at a first-class hotel.

I acted as her guide and escort, but such was our demeanor toward each other that no one could have made out the relationship.

She seemed to argue that if she dropped formality for a moment I might propose marriage, and it was "sir" on every possible occasion.

She settled the hotel bill herself, but gave me money enough to buy tickets to Boston after a stay of twenty days.

We were in Boston a fortnight, and then went to Hartford, and there I got the first inkling of her idea in making the trip.

She sent for me to come to the ladies' parlor, and when I arrived she began:

"Mr. Jewett, you have noticed the portly man seated on my right at the table?"

"Yes'm."

"Blue eyes and bald-headed, and looks very fatherly."

"Yes'm."

"I wish you to ascertain whether he is married or a widower."

That evening I reported to her that the bald-headed man was a widower, and in the real estate business in an interior town.

"Very well, sir," she stiffly said. "You may now retire, and I will send for you when I want you."

After that I watched her at meal-time, and I soon caught on to the fact that she "set her cap" for the widower.

It was laughable to see her try to ape the girl of twenty, and in three days everybody in the dining room had caught on and was giving her the guy.

The old gal knew her gait, however, and in about a week more I got an order to show up again in the parlor.

"Mr. Jewett," she said, as I stood before her, "I—I think that Mr. Sampson rath—rather likes me."

"Yes'm."

"You may say to him that I am worth \$80,000 in cash and bonds, never have been married, and that his appearance pleases me."

I managed after a day or two to get in with Mr. Sampson and convey this information, and I saw that it hit him right between the eyes.

Two hours later he called on her, and three days after his call she sent for me to say:

"Mr. Jewett, you will accompany me home, where I will pay you your salary for the year. Mr. Sampson and I are engaged."

And three months later they were married, and it turned out to be a happy match.

CENTURIES-OLD PIPE

A tobacco pipe estimated to be about 235 years old has been found in the tower of St. Mary's, London, England, which is the only part of that church remaining. From the position in which the pipe was found, it would seem that it was left behind by one of the workmen when the tower was being rebuilt in 1690 after the great fire of 1666.

CURRENT NEWS

FOXES BRING \$1,000 A PAIR

One of the most valuable shipments ever made from a farm in southwestern Wisconsin consisted of thirty-five pairs of silver foxes, sold recently by Garvey Brothers, of Lynville, Wis., for \$35,000, says "The Milwaukee Journal."

The foxes were sold at \$800 to \$1,200 a pair, an average of about \$1,000. The buyers will use the foxes as foundation stock either on fox ranches already in operation or farms to be started.

MAN STRANGLES A COYOTE

A hunger-stricken coyote paid with its life when it attacked Joe Possa and a woman companion. Joe choked it to death.

For some time the coyotes, forced into boldness because heavy snow has made their food supply scarce, have been pestering ranchers and molesting foot travelers. Possa said that after he and his companion were cornered by the animal, it leaped at the woman, scratching her. When its teeth became enmeshed in her dress, Joe grabbed it about the neck.

The coyote, on display at Lakeside, Neb., weighs fifty pounds.

GIRLS BURNED IN CABARET

Three young women were painfully burned about the face and hands here today when fifteen toy balloons floated from strings fastened to their waists exploded while they sat at a table in the Palais Royal Cabaret, Atlantic City, N. J.

The injured girls, who were taken to the Atlantic City Hospital for treatment, were Helen Mecker, 426 Madison Avenue; Ethel McGee, 2801 Atlantic Avenue and Helen Landis of the same address, all of this city.

According to police investigation, each girl had five balloons, which exploded when several men patrons of the cabaret touched lighted cigars to them. The girls' clothing ignited. Other guests put out the flames.

NEW GOLF GAME

Handicapped in his golf game by rheumatic pains that troubled him every time he swung at the ball, N. E. Warwick of Cleveland, O., refused to give up his favorite sport. Instead, he invented a remarkable new form of golf, says Popular Science Monthly, in which the ball is hurled with a whipping motion above the head instead of being driven from the ground.

With light, whiplike sticks he now claims he can make a better score than ever before. The heads of the sticks are cups that hold the ball. Warwick has developed three kinds of clubs—the hurler, for the long shots ordinarily made with driver or brassie; the midhurler, corresponding to the midiron; and the sinker, corresponding to the putter. With the hurler Warwick claims to get more distance than the ordinary golfer gets in the average drive off a tee.

BREEDING FROGS

William Waddington is the possessor of six large tracts of land in the Illinois bottoms on the Mississippi River, a little south of St. Louis, and has dealt extensively in the frog business. Much of those bottom lands are marshy and swampy and unfitted for agricultural purposes.

Many years ago Mr. Waddington conceived the idea of "frog farming," and after cleaning up the swamp lands with the improved scrapers and inclosing several hundred acres with a strong wire fence and otherwise beautifying the grounds surrounding these marshy places, he soon became the possessor of a huge frog farm.

Convinced that he had the grounds and the fresh spring water, he was determined to experiment in the breeding, raising and selling of the delicious amphibious animals. He made a trip to Paris and there investigated the propagating and handling of this palatable luxury. He made arrangements to have shipped to him twenty-five French bulls and seventy-five female frogs, which landed in good order and condition at St. Louis. From there they were conveyed to his froggery in the Illinois bottoms and turned loose to roam over the placid waters that sparkled far and wide.

In less than a year the foreign stock had completely driven the native breed from the swamps and he was shipping the "French" article to St. Louis and Chicago. He had a contract with several packing and slaughtering houses for the offal, which was hauled to the different froggeries. Stale bread and broken crackers were also used in feeding, besides the innumerable insects and water wiggins that abound in such damp and marshy districts. It was a sight to see thousands of these frogs jumping to their accustomed places at feeding time. They were fed twice a day. When the first came into the market they sold as high as \$2 per dozen, but the price fluctuated according to the demand, but would average \$1 per dozen through the season.

During the winter months they would disappear by burying themselves in the mud along the outer edge of the lake or swamp. It requires a French frog about three months to mature—that is to say, large enough to market, but they become full grown by the age of six months, while the American frog requires fully eight months, and then is not more than three-quarters the size of the French animal—the latter a most beautiful yellowish-green color, with golden spots all over his body.

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BEAVER COLONY FOUND IN NEW JERSEY TOWN

Within ten miles of the 125th Street Ferry, at Oradel, Bergen County, N. J., has been discovered a thriving beaver colony. The beavers have built a dam in three sections at least 100 feet long, damming up a brook that flows through a swampy section and flooding an area of 50 acres. This is the first beaver colony it is said, to be reported in New Jersey in years, and it is believed the animals have migrated from the Adirondack Mountains.

Thirty years ago the beaver was all but extinct, and stringent protective measures were instituted in hope of recolonizing old beaver ponds in the Adirondacks. A few years ago a colony was reported in Bear Mountain Park. The new colony was discovered by Charles Livingston Bull, animal artist; J. Irving Crump, a writer of Western stories, and Edward Ordway, a former Boy Scout.

Game Warden Small, of Hackensack says the colony will be closely guarded and any attempt to trap the animals or interfere with their work will be severely punished.

LITTLE ADS

Write to Riker & King, Advertising Offices, 530 Broadway, New York City, or 29 East Madison Street, Chicago, for particulars about advertising in this magazine.

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AGENTS—90c an hour to advertise and distribute samples to consumer. Write quick for territory and particulars. American Products Co., 5921 American Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.

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AGENTS: WRITE FOR FREE SAMPLES. Sell Madison "Better-Made" shirts for large Manufacturer, direct to wearer. No capital, or experience required. Many earn \$100 weekly and bonus. Madison Mfgs., 564 Broadway, New York.

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\$1,800.00 MADE BY ALLEN also Maier in 30 days selling **START RITE SWITCH** for Fords. To start car just retard spark. Starts easier, saves bendix also starter trouble. Secure demonstrator. Write today for plan. Dept. 1217, National Sales Co., Inc., Coin, Iowa.

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DETECTIVES NEEDED EVERYWHERE. Work home or travel, experience unnecessary. Write George R. Wagner, former Govt. Detective, 1968 Broadway, N. Y.

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EXCHANGE LETTERS. Make new friends. Private introductions. Satisfaction guaranteed. Particulars free. Good Fellowship Club, Reading, Penna.

CHARMING LADY worth \$50,000. Lonely, will marry. Elnore, B-1022, Wichita, Kan.

MARRY—Business girl, 27, worth \$73,000; widow, 48, \$36,000; girl, 19, \$40,000. Descriptions and photos free. Mrs. Warn, 8634 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, Calif.

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PRETTY GIRLIE, wealthy but oh so lonesome. League, Box 39, Oxford, Fla.

CHARMING YOUNG WIDOW worth \$38,000 wishes early marriage. Club, B-1022, Wichita, Kansas.

MARRY—Sweethearts everywhere. Many wealthy pretty girls. Ladies, gents write. (Stamp) Doris Dawn, East Cleveland, Ohio.

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PRETTY GIRLIE, wealthy, but oh so lonesome. League, Box 39, Oxford, Fla.

MARRY—**MARRIAGE DIRECTORY** with photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 545, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—Write for big new directory with photos and descriptions. Free. National Agency, Dept. A. 4606, Station E., Kansas City, Mo.

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FINDS TOMBS OF 3000 B. C.

An important discovery has been made at Bahrein, one of the group of Aval Islands in the Persian Gulf near the coast of Arabia, by Doctor MacKay of the British School of Archaeology. It is a cemetery of the third millennium B. C. Sepulchral mounds seven miles from Manaweh, which have been excavated, have revealed burial chambers and cells containing decayed wooden pegs so arranged as to suggest that the wardrobes of the dead were hung there for use in after life.

The large tombs showed signs of having been robbed of valuable objects. The small tombs were intact. Pottery, ivory, shells, arrowheads, and spearheads were found in them, but there was no trace of gold or silver. An ivory statuette of a woman shows high artistic talent.

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